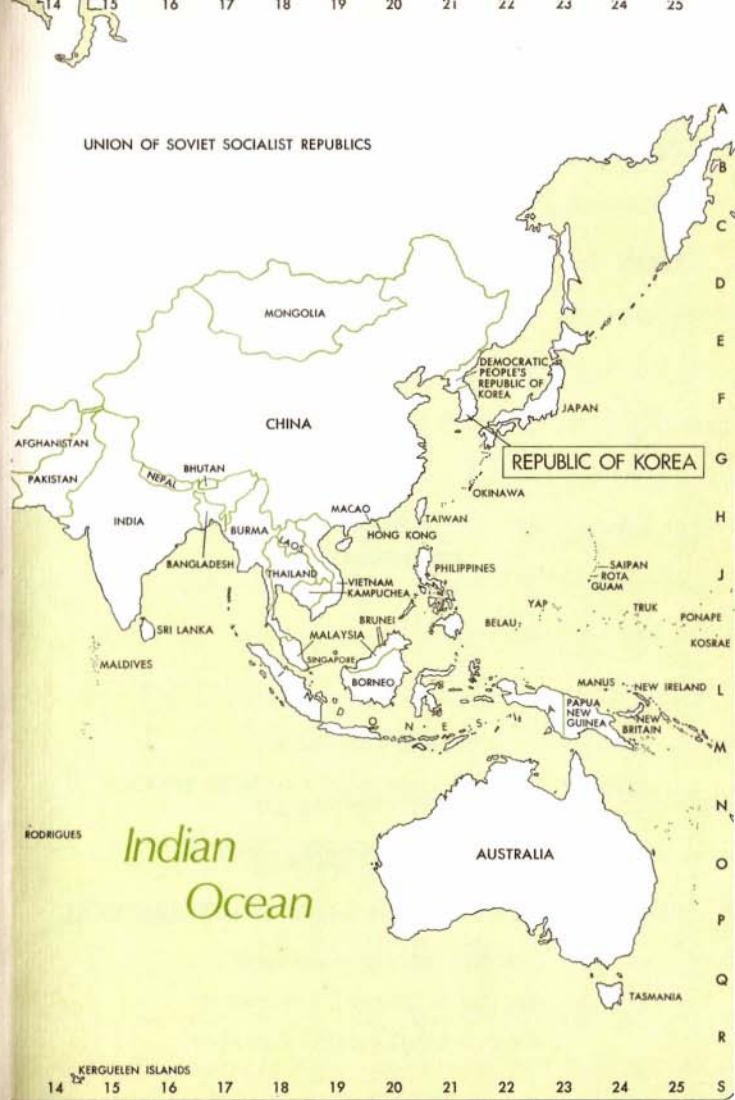
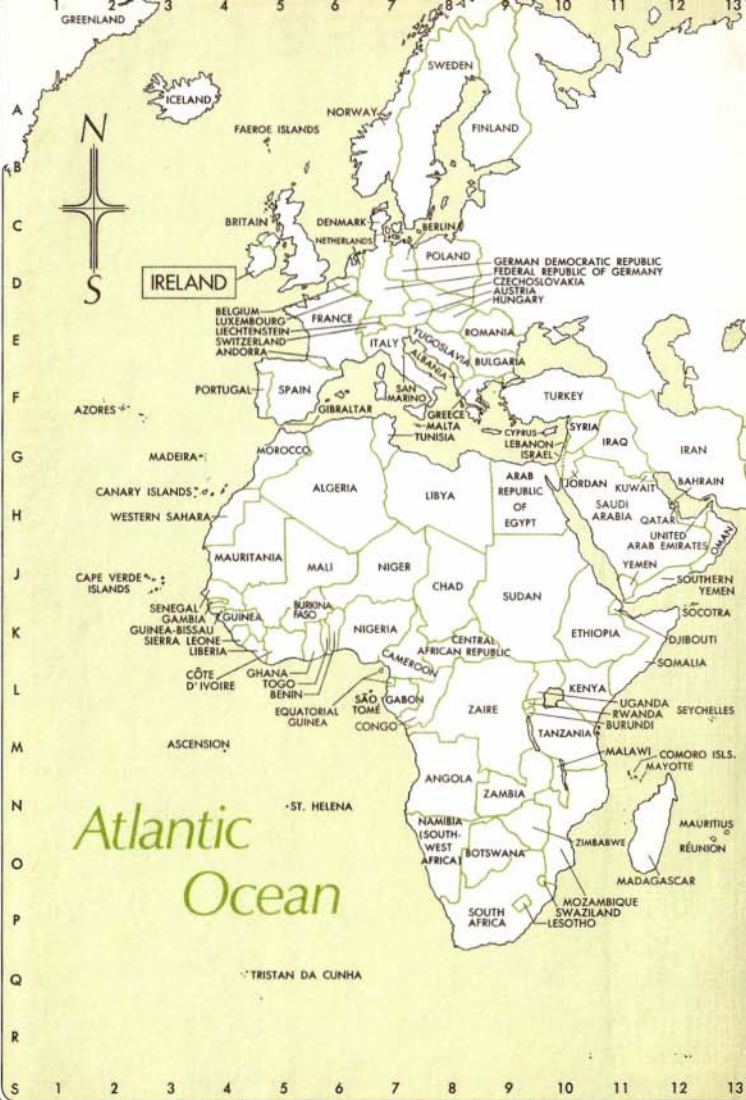


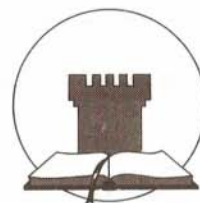
1988

1988
YEARBOOK
OF
JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES



1988 YEARBOOK of Jehovah's Witnesses

Containing Report for the Service Year
of 1987



Corporate Publishers

**WATCH TOWER BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY
OF PENNSYLVANIA**

**WATCHTOWER BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY
OF NEW YORK, INC.**

INTERNATIONAL BIBLE STUDENTS ASSOCIATION

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1988 YEARBOOK of Jehovah's Witnesses

HE WAS only 33 years old when his life was cut short by execution. Yet, 1,900 years later, his message still lives! His name was Jesus Christ. Less than three days before his cruel death, while he was sitting in a grove of olive trees on a hilltop overlooking Jerusalem, he uttered a prophecy the fulfillment of which confronts everyone alive today with a life-or-death choice. He foretold that the "good news" of God's Kingdom would be preached in all the inhabited earth.—Matt. 24:14.

Acceptance of that good news today means life eternal; rejection brings everlasting death. (Rev. 14:6, 7) Like Joshua of old, people desiring life must choose to serve Jehovah. (Josh. 24:15) The interests of God's Kingdom must occupy the first place in their lives. (Matt. 6:33) But how would this vital message be spread?

Jesus' instructions to his followers were simple and direct: Preach and teach. He wanted his disciples to imitate what he himself did. (Matt. 4:23; 9:35) They were to be preachers of the good news of the Kingdom; spirit-directed Kingdom preaching would become the heartbeat of true Christianity. Thus, fulfillment of Matthew 24:14 has propelled the message of God's Kingdom to the most distant part of the earth.

"Hope in Jehovah and keep his way" is the 1988 theme text of Jehovah's Witnesses as they press forward to the ends of the earth in the preaching and disciple-making work.—Ps. 37:34.

INDEX

Page

Highlights of reports from around the world	3
1987 Service Year Report, 210 Countries or Territories	34
Acts of Jehovah's Witnesses in Modern Times in:	
Ireland	66
Korea	136
Costa Rica	198

1988 Yearbook of Jehovah's Witnesses
English (yb88-E)

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Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania
International Bible Students Association

Who are accomplishing this grand work today? Jehovah's Witnesses. Our record of Kingdom preaching for more than a hundred years speaks for itself. We are following the same pattern and using the same theme in our preaching and teaching as Christ's disciples did in the first century. Our current report proves that we have not slowed down in this work.

"YOU HAVE MADE THE REJOICING GREAT"

Jehovah's Witnesses are harvesting with a spirit of rejoicing. As expressed at Isaiah 9:3: "You have made the nation populous; for it you have made the rejoicing great. They have rejoiced before you as with the rejoicing in the harvesttime, as those who are joyful when they divide up the spoil." We rejoice that Jehovah has blessed our preaching and disciple-making work with more Kingdom workers and that he has given us the tools to help them. Thus, the following report gives us outstanding reasons to be jubilant!

During the last service year, on the average each month 3,237,751 Jehovah's Witnesses were actively preaching, with a peak of 3,395,612 ministers. In one year's time, we spent an extraordinary total of 739,019,286 hours—the equivalent of 84,000 years—in Kingdom preaching!

Jehovah's Witnesses are also teachers. What is the purpose of Christian teaching? To make baptized disciples of Christ. (Matt. 28:19, 20) And since Jesus Christ worshiped Jehovah, his disciples must also become worshipers of Him.

In the 1987 service year, 230,843 were baptized as Jehovah's Witnesses and disciples of Je-

sus Christ. The potential for additional disciples is great, since we conducted an average of 3,005,048 Bible studies each month. Let us now take a quick around-the-world look at some theocratic highlights that will also make us rejoice.

The past service year brought excellent results in *France*, with the following peaks in May: 96,954 publishers—including 10,180 auxiliary pioneers and 3,411 regular pioneers. This was the 22nd consecutive peak for regular pioneers. During May, about 15 percent of the total publishers were in some form of full-time service. Also, the publishers spent an average of 12.9 hours in the ministry and reported a peak of 65,806 Bible studies during this same month.

Portugal's service year has been blessed with new publisher peaks in all the countries and territories where the branch supervises Kingdom preaching. Portugal alone had seven publisher peaks, topping the 32,000 mark for the first time. An outstanding development is that the number of home Bible studies now being conducted exceeds the number of publishers in five of the countries and territories reporting to this branch. What thrilling prospects lie ahead for a bountiful harvest!

"We are thankful to Jehovah that we were able to have another year of blessed activities," says the *Japan* branch. During the service year, 125 new congregations were formed in Japan. The number of Kingdom publishers increased to 120,722 in August—the 104th successive monthly peak. What was most encouraging was the number of home Bible studies. In June 166,277 were held—a

14-percent increase over last year's average. The new brochure "*Look! I Am Making All Things New*" proved to be a very effective tool in Japan for making return visits and establishing home Bible studies.

In May, the month of a military coup there, the **Fiji** branch witnessed its 29th consecutive peak in publishers. June saw another peak of over 1,300 publishers in the field. "All that you people have been telling us in the past is coming true," a police inspector admitted to one Witness. "If all people in this country were Jehovah's Witnesses, we would not have this national disturbance."

For the first time, the publisher figure passed 45,000 in **Australia**, and almost every month saw a new peak in regular pioneers. The publishers were zealous for the field service, especially in April when they averaged 12.1 hours.

Since 1947, migration from overseas has accounted for close to 40 percent of Australia's population growth. The European countries of Britain, Ireland, Italy, Yugoslavia, Greece, Germany, the Netherlands, and Poland have been the major contributors. Because of this influx, 58 ethnic-language congregations and 39 groups have been formed. They are delighted to have regular meetings as well as circuit assembly and district convention programs arranged in 20 different languages.

More recently, Australia has seen an influx of refugees from Vietnam, Laos, Kampuchea, Thailand, and other countries of Southeast Asia. The majority of these people have undergone extreme

Portugal had seven publisher peaks, topping the 32,000 mark for the first time

suffering and privation. Now that they are living in more stable surroundings, many of them are responding to the good news. For example, in Sydney 124 publishers and 24 pioneers make up a congregation that has a large Asian population in its territory. This congregation rejoices over its 220 Bible studies. The branch comments, "Truly, a great crowd out of all nations is being gathered for survival!"

In one **African** country where the work of Jehovah's Witnesses has been under ban for about 20 years, 17 new



congregations have been formed in the past service year. The congregations experienced an 18-percent increase in the average number of auxiliary pioneers. What was reaped by these busy auxiliary pioneers? More Bible studies are being conducted—a 22-percent increase!

Zambia reached a new peak of 67,144 publishers in April—16.5 percent higher than last year's average. Many more are sharing in the pioneer ministry too. Regular pioneers increased 13.5 percent and auxiliary pioneers increased 20.5 percent compared to a year ago. During the year the branch registered the 1,715th congregation, an increase of 93 congregations since the start of the 1987 service year.

A pioneer in Zambia's Copperbelt discovered a different way to make the good news appealing to others. He says: "I have always tried to talk to my workmate about the Kingdom good news, but he flatly refused to take any literature or magazines. One day I took our attractive calendar to work and showed it to him at lunch break. The man exclaimed, 'What a beautiful calendar!' He was so impressed that he even accepted a Bible study and is making good progress spiritually."

The high point of the year in **Burkina Faso** was the decision to make more use of the local Moore language in teaching the congregations. Since February, selected study articles from *The Watchtower* have been translated and published in a monthly issue. Subsequently, *Our Kingdom Ministry* was also translated. Thus, nine of the French-speaking congregations joyfully arranged for their meetings to be conducted in the Moore language.

MAGAZINES—AIDS IN KINGDOM PREACHING

Publishers in **Liberia** have been averaging 15.4 hours monthly in the field ministry, resulting in a noteworthy peak in magazine distribution. "With 17,630 magazines distributed, more magazines were put into the hands of the public than in any month since March 1972," writes the branch. "The attractive appearance of our full-colour magazines has undoubtedly stimulated the magazine activity in this country. Publishers are finding that their supply is exhausted within a few days of their receiving the new issues. People frequently approach the publishers on the street and ask, 'Do you have any of the "Bibles" for me?'—meaning *The Watchtower* and *Awake!*"

"With the publication of our magazines in four colours since April 1987, many publishers have stepped up their magazine work tremendously," reports the **Zimbabwe** branch. After receiving one of the first issues of these full-color magazines, a brother from a rural area of the country wrote: "I took a supply and stood at a business centre to offer the magazines to passersby. A few people accepted copies. On their way home, they showed them to their neighbours, and shortly thereafter there was a rush of people from the neighbourhood to get the magazines. In a few minutes, my supply was exhausted."

In one **Côte d'Ivoire** (Ivory Coast) congregation, after having studied about magazine witnessing in the March 1, 1987, issue of *The Watchtower*, two brothers decided to apply some of the

suggestions on their way home from the Kingdom Hall. They enthusiastically started to offer the magazines to everyone they met along the way. By the time they reached their house, they had placed 20 magazines.

Some publishers try novel methods in order to place subscriptions. In **Argentina** a brother decided to take his bound volume of the *Awake!* magazine to his Bible student and show him the different subjects considered during the year. The Bible student was impressed by all the information presented. He had just purchased some books covering related subjects for about \$24.00. Now he could get similar information from our magazines for only \$5.00 for a year's subscription. Needless to say, the brother placed the subscription.

OUTSTANDING MEMORIAL ATTENDANCE!

On April 12, 1987, in less time than it took for one revolution of the earth on its axis, 8,965,221 Jehovah's Witnesses and their guests, speaking over 160 languages, assembled in 210 lands to celebrate the Lord's Evening Meal. The Watch Tower branches have sent in some thrilling reports.

El Salvador's Memorial attendance was 58,933. Since the peak number of publishers for the year was 16,041, there is still a lot of work to be done there. El Salvador's neighbor **Belize** had an outstanding Memorial attendance too. A total of 3,928 persons gathered, which is five times the peak number of publishers! This means that there was about one person in attendance for every 44 inhabitants of the country.

Zambia's attendance at the Memorial was 381,129—16 percent higher than last year's figure. Indeed, a great number of people desire spiritual assistance in this country. In **Hong Kong** 3,583 attended the Memorial, 45,466 were present in **Belgium**, and 198,797 assembled in **France**—double the number of publishers for all three countries. And the **United States** saw over 86,000 more attend the Memorial this year than last year, a total of 1,778,066. **Mexico**, with a peak of 222,168 publishers, had an astounding Memorial attendance of 957,081!

PIONEER SERVICE SCHOOL

With over 44,000 new pioneers, the Pioneer Service School has had no enrollment problems. After ten years of existence, the school is increasingly effective in training full-time evangelizers. Said one sister in **Guyana** who is 74 years old and a widow, "Though ill at the time, I had the joy of attending the Pioneer Service School." Attendance, though, was a struggle for her. "Because I could hardly walk," she continues, "the school instructor would come for me every morning and escort me to the class and back home every afternoon. With the encouragement from the Pioneer Service School, I am now able to do far more in service."

The Pioneer Service School gives practical advice on how to help Bible students progress toward baptism. Another pioneer from Guyana said: "Before I attended the pioneer school, I had a Bible student who could not attend the meetings. Her excuse? She was always too busy with housework. After learning at the school how to show more personal

interest in others, I put into practice what I learned. At my next Bible study, I gave my student advice that worked well. Since frequent visits from friends and relatives kept her from finishing her chores, I suggested that she ask them to help her with some of the housework. Now my student has time not only for the meetings but also for the field ministry."

In **Lebanon**, December 1986 marked the month of the first Pioneer Service School since 1978. "We did not have any group large enough before to hold a class," explains the branch office. "But with Jehovah's blessing, the spirit of pioneering spread so fast that we had enough eligible pioneers to fill one class."

One pioneer who appreciated attending the school in **Zambia** wrote: "I have gone through the pioneer book three times every year since school and have improved my service very much."

"TRUST IN JEHOVAH" DISTRICT CONVENTIONS

As international tensions mount, the world's future becomes bleak to more and more people. Why? Because they trust in such things as their riches, their wisdom, their might, or their political leaders. (Luke 21:25-28) But Jehovah's Witnesses have a different outlook. We face the future with confidence because we 'trust in Jehovah with all our heart and do not lean upon our own understanding.' (Prov. 3:5) So it was timely that the series of three-day district conventions that began in June 1987 should underscore the theme "Trust in Jehovah."

At the 24 conventions in the **Federal Republic of Germany**, a new peak in attendance was reached—159,361—some 8,500 more than in any previous year. The number of persons baptized was also a new peak for summer conventions—1,455.

The **United States** branch reports: "We were encouraged to see an attendance of 1,288,313 at the 123 'Trust in Jehovah' District Conventions, with somewhat over 1 percent of those in attendance, or 13,562, being baptized. This is the first time in five years that the number baptized has been over 1 percent."

In some parts of the world, the "Divine Peace" District Conventions that began in the latter part of the 1986 service year carried over into the 1987 service year. Panama and Ghana are two examples.

The brothers in **Panama** had a problem. Since political turmoil was upsetting the country, could conventions be held freely? Conditions did not look promising. People had been staging work strikes and street demonstrations, and the government had sent antiriot troops to disperse them with tear-gas bombs. Blame was put on the Catholic Church for using its pulpits to incite parishioners to protest. For example, one government newspaper printed front-page headlines accusing the archbishop of defying the government and inciting the people to revolt. In large letters at the bottom of the front page appeared the words: "'Religion in Politics—Is This God's Will?'" (See page 4)." On page 4 of this newspaper, an article with that title was reproduced from the *Awake!* magazine of April 22, 1987. It included a picture of a clergyman shaking hands with Nazi dictator Adolf Hitler.

"The newspaper article was obviously published to show the contrast between our position and that of the Catholic Church," writes the Panama branch. "As a result, while public auditoriums had been denied for political meetings, in the middle of this political unrest, we were able to hold our district conventions with a combined attendance of more than 10,000 persons."

The **Ghana** Branch Committee was concerned about giving a thorough witness in the unassigned territories in the northern part of the country. Hence, brothers and sisters from the south were encouraged to attend the "Divine Peace" District Convention scheduled for the northern city of Tamale. The response? Overwhelming!

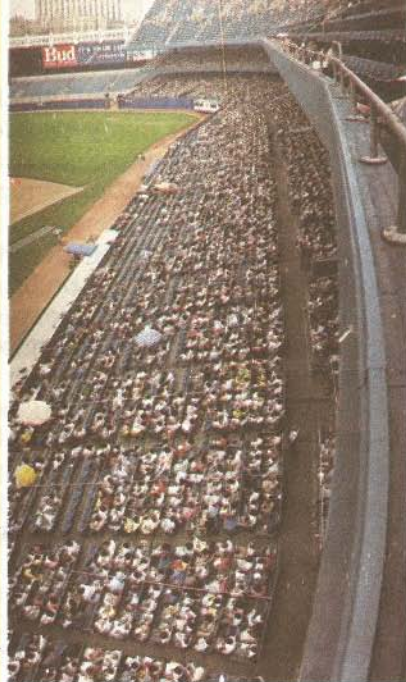
"We anticipated some one thousand participants, some of whom we figured would make their own travel arrangements," reports the branch office. "So we wrote to a bus company and requested ten buses with 70 seats each. But when the reservation forms from the congregations came back, over 3,000 had decided to attend the Tamale convention! How were we to find buses to move all of them to the convention?"

Transportation in Ghana is in short supply, and much of the 400-mile road from the port city of Accra in the south, where the branch is located, to Tamale is in poor condition. So bus companies are reluctant to take on the business. But two companies agreed to lease the branch a total of 28 buses. However, four more buses were needed.

"The Ministry of Trade and Tourism had imported four luxury, air-conditioned coaches for the pur-



**"Trust in Jehovah"
District Conventions
attract record crowds**



pose of developing tourism in Ghana," continues the branch report. "The ministry, however, had refused to rent the coaches to any tour group. We made application for these coaches. It seemed hopeless at first. Finally, Tuesday afternoon, just before the Wednesday morning when the coaches were needed, the minister signed the letter releasing the buses to us. The tour director at the minister's office said to his colleagues when he saw the minister sign the release letter: 'Jehovah is working!'"

So off trekked the brothers with their families in a convoy of 32 buses. This sight in itself was a great

witness all the way to Tamale. No other group had ever moved so many people at one time. People along the route were abuzz with excitement, talking about the amazing things Jehovah's Witnesses can accomplish.

In addition, the Ghana edition of *Our Kingdom Ministry* encouraged the brothers going to Tamale to make it a point to spend at least one hour each day in field service, either before or after the convention sessions. So at seven one morning, two brothers called at the guesthouse where three members of the Branch Committee attending the convention were accommodated. They said: "Brothers, we are working this territory and have run out of literature. Do you have anything we can use so we can continue?"

Therefore, Tamale, a predominantly Muslim city with a population of 146,000, was thoroughly covered by house-to-house witnessing. Even Bible studies were started. The peak convention attendance of 4,220 shows that many interested persons from the town attended the convention. The branch report concludes: "We are indeed hopeful that the two Tamale congregations will do a good watering of the seed so bountifully sown and that in his own time, Jehovah will make it grow." —1 Cor. 3:6.

'CROWNING WITH GOODNESS' RESULTS IN EXPANSION

"You have crowned the year with your goodness," wrote the psalmist. (Ps. 65:11) The efforts of our brothers in the field were "crowned" with increases that have necessitated Kingdom Hall and branch

expansion construction. The following are a few examples:

With another marvelous year of activity behind it, *Mexico* looks forward to an exciting service year in 1988. The construction of a new Bethel complex of 126 rooms is already progressing very well. A large building is also being added to the present printery. And Mexico is the first branch to install two new four-color presses and two bindery lines simultaneously. All these projects should be completed during the new service year.

Portugal's construction of a new Bethel Home continues to dominate their building program. "To date," states the branch report, "all construction costs have been covered by local contributions." This included the value of many personal items and possessions. All kinds of building materials, as well as pigs, chickens, sheep, and ducks, were also made available.

Not too many years ago in *Colombia*, it was considered good if 15 new congregations were added during the year. Now in only one day, the Service Department received 13 applications for new congregations in just the coastal city of Barranquilla! During the past service year, 143 new congregations have been formed in the country.

Some 30 years ago, the city of Medellín was known for being the center of Catholicism in Colombia, and the country boasted that 99 percent of its population were Catholics. Because of the moral decline, drug traffic, and the dwindling faith of its populace, Medellín is now one of the more unsafe cities in the country. These changes have caused

many honesthearted persons to react favorably to the preaching of the good news. There are now 35 congregations in and around Medellín. "All this increase has created more Kingdom Hall 'emergencies,'" says the branch. What the local brothers did in the small town of Segovia, not far from Medellín, illustrates their willingness to meet this emergency situation.

The district overseer reported: "In Segovia there is a handful of 32 publishers. Of this total, 17 are sisters, all very hard workers. A year ago this small group bought a lot, started making their own cement building blocks, and gathered other materials for the construction of a Kingdom Hall. The circuit overseer had visited shortly after the lot was obtained. When he returned five months later, what a surprise it was to find the hall completed! All the work had been done on Saturdays, Sundays, and at

Newly built Kingdom Hall, Kerala, India



night." The hall is even large enough to seat a small circuit assembly. The first one held there had 263 in attendance, with 5 persons being baptized.

A volcanic eruption followed by a killer mudslide devastated the area around Armero, Colombia. Our worldwide brotherhood responded willingly. After the physical needs of the survivors had been cared for, the Governing Body gave approval to the branch to use the remaining funds to care for the spiritual interests of the brothers. Therefore, suitable Kingdom Halls were built in the area affected by the volcano so that spiritual education could continue without interruption.

The congregation of La Dorada was one of three congregations receiving international aid to assist in constructing a new Kingdom Hall. Much of the construction work was done by sisters and interested persons, since there were only six baptized males in that congregation. However, loving help was provided by a group of brothers from Bogotá. And in less than a week, La Dorada had a new Kingdom Hall. Construction started on Thursday, and on the following Monday evening, they had their first meeting, with 200 in attendance. Arrangements were also made for new halls in Mariquita and Lérida. After surviving the ravages of the volcano's rushing wall of mud, many Colombians are now seeking the refreshing waters of truth.

To take care of a large throng of worshipers in **Argentina**, 121 new congregations were formed during the service year—an average of 10 congregations per month! In many places, the Kingdom Halls are too small, and in others there are four or

five congregations meeting in the same building. The branch started a Kingdom Hall fund and soon will begin granting loans for new halls. Special arrangements now are being made to unify the manpower and contributions of the congregations in order to finish a number of Kingdom Halls and then start to build new ones.

The **Sri Lanka** branch saw three new congregations organized this past service year, one of these in the politically troubled north. Five congregations have built their own Kingdom Halls. The one at Chilaw was completed with the help of brothers visiting from the Federal Republic of Germany.

A circuit overseer in Kerala, **India**, reports that two congregations recently constructed their own Kingdom Halls. One of these has a seating capacity of 120. Within this first year, the attendance grew so much that the congregation needs to hold two sessions of meetings at different times.

Providing Kingdom Halls is a real problem in **Taiwan**, since congregations have difficulty renting suitable facilities, especially in the cities. Often when a place is found, the landlord raises the rent so high after the first year that the brothers have to move. During the past year or so, eight congregations—38 percent of the total congregations—have either moved into new Kingdom Halls or begun obtaining their own buildings. Congregations in larger cities purchase several adjacent apartments on the same floor of a building and convert them into a Kingdom Hall.

In the **United States**, the number of congregations increased by 211 by the end of this service

year. That is an average of four new congregations each week! With these increases, more Kingdom Halls are needed. By December 1987, the Society Kingdom Hall Fund had made money available for the building of 387 Kingdom Halls. During this past service year, 108 halls benefited from this fund.

QUICKLY BUILT KINGDOM HALLS ARE EVERYWHERE

The idea of building Kingdom Halls complete and ready for meetings in just a few days began in the United States. It was developed and became more organized during the past decade. By 1987 the idea had borne fruit around the world. For example, on the weekend of June 26-28, 1987, **New Zealand** Witnesses began and completed that country's first quickly built Kingdom Hall at Cambridge in the North Island—and people noticed.

"Project Close to a Miracle" was the front-page headline in the *Cambridge Edition*, the local newspaper. The accompanying article continued: "On Friday it looked like the whole world had moved into Arnold Street. Up to 800 Jehovah[']s Witnesses from all over the North Island descended on a property and proceeded to work something close to a miracle. They set out to build a Kingdom Hall complete with landscaped garden in two and a half days. And they did! Perhaps the most mind-boggling aspect of the exercise was the organization and sheer quiet of the operation."

In **Belize**, a group of 13 publishers had an attendance of 30 or 40 at their meetings in San Pedro,

Ambergris Cay, but they had no Kingdom Hall. They were meeting on the deck of a brother's home, so they decided to proceed with a quickly built Kingdom Hall. However, obstacles blocked the way. Since they are located on an isolated island some 36 miles from Belize City, they would have to transport every piece of their Kingdom Hall to the island. Such a project had never been undertaken before in Belize. They planned to use local types of wood that can withstand the elements but are very hard. Holes would have to be drilled before the sections could be nailed together. All of those working on the project would have to come over by boat or plane. Jehovah's blessing was evident, for the Kingdom Hall was built and dedicated with 247 in attendance.

September 1986 was the month set for **Denmark's** first quickly built Kingdom Hall. Newspapers, radio, and television reported favorably on the event. Since then, the year has been 'crowned with goodness' by the construction of seven more quickly built halls.

In the **Netherlands**, it was long thought that quickly built Kingdom Halls could not be constructed there because of government laws and regulations. But the cooperation of the authorities and the willingness of the brothers made that country's first quickly built hall an enormous success. As a result, much interest in the Kingdom message was stimulated in that area of Europe.

Of **Luxembourg's** 20 congregations, 12 were involved in working on new Kingdom Halls or enlarging existing ones during this service year.

These comprise 60 percent of the country's congregations. Just to the north, **Belgium** thus far has two regional building teams that have erected six quickly built halls, with more projects ready to start. What causes for rejoicing!

Canada, also demonstrating growth, constructed 11 Kingdom Halls during the year. Thus far, Canada has a total of 120 quickly built Kingdom Halls. Nine of these are double halls. A new Assembly Hall is under construction in Montreal, with plans to start using it by the end of 1987. Canada now has eight Assembly Halls.

The **Federal Republic of Germany** has 11 building committees. During the past service year, 19 quickly built halls have been constructed. An additional 62 Kingdom Halls have been built or are in the process of construction. Jehovah has crowned this service year not only with rapid building work on 81 Kingdom Halls but also with the dedication of the ninth Assembly Hall. Thus, all circuits in the Federal Republic of Germany are accommodated in beautiful Assembly Halls, which are also being used for foreign-language district conventions.

Britain now has five Assembly Halls serving 75 percent of that land's Kingdom publishers.

The past service year brought new peaks in publishers to Jehovah's people in **Norway**. This increase, however, has created a great need for Kingdom Halls. "Up till now we have completed 25 quickly built Kingdom Halls, which have caught the interest of the press and the public," reports the branch office. For example, in one Norwegian city

Expansion at World Headquarters

In January 1983 the Society purchased in Brooklyn, New York, one half of a 200-foot-square city block containing a nine-story factory building. This building has now been completely renovated. Then in December 1986 the Society purchased the other half of the

same block containing another nine-story factory building. These two buildings are now connected to the original four-building factory complex by a bridge that is 161 feet long and 14 feet wide.

Since 1978 the Society has installed and put into op-

The two recently purchased nine-story factory buildings that occupy a city block



The newly built 11-story Bethel Home at 97 Columbia Heights

eration in its Brooklyn plant eight Harris high-speed, four-color, web offset printing presses. (Four similar presses are in use at Watchtower Farms, about 100 miles north of Brooklyn.) To keep up with increased

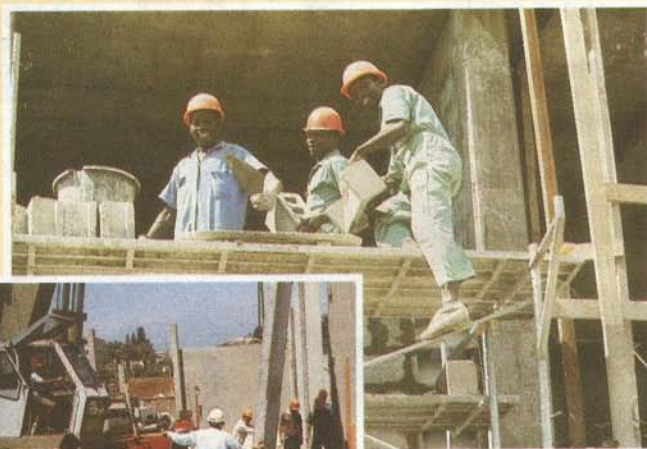
printing demands for Bibles, during the past service year the Society purchased three more new offset presses. They are Hantscho five-unit, four-color, high-speed web offset presses. Two of these are two-web presses for book and magazine printing. The other is a 116-foot-long, four-web press for printing on Bible paper. With this new press, the Brooklyn plant now has three presses for printing on Bible paper.



Additional property for housing the Brooklyn Bethel family was acquired in February 1987. The 11-story structure is located at 97 Columbia Heights and will have 127 rooms, with underground parking space for 30 cars. A hired contractor completed the shell of the building, and the Society's personnel will finish the interior construction by approximately September 1988.

the brothers went to the city building authorities to have certain matters clarified pertaining to construction. Before leaving, they told of their plans to build the hall within three days. As the brothers were descending the stairway, a roar of laughter came from all in the office. The officials simply could not believe that it was possible to build such a large building in just three days!

Work on the hall advanced even faster than planned. By noon on Friday, the roof was on and the bricklayers were halfway through with their work. Then one of the officials who had laughed



Branches where international volunteer construction workers assisted

International Volunteer Construction Workers

During the month of November 1985, 11 volunteers—ranging in age from a 26-year-old single brother to grandparents 59 years old—left the United States for Africa. Their mission? To assist in the construction of a new branch facility in a country that serves more than 100,000 Witnesses. Since then, over 800 volunteers skilled in the construction trades and representing 12 branches have been helping on 13 branch construction projects. Some workers volunteered for a minimum of one year, others for a two-week to three-month stay. How do these volunteers and their families feel about such an assignment? Here are some of their expressions:

□ "For years I have worked hard, but in the world. Now all my energies go to Jehovah's organization. To have nothing to do with the world is a relief, and to expend yourself for Jehovah is a physical, emotional, and spiritual joy."

□ "It is difficult to explain the strong friendships that developed in the short time I worked on this project."

□ "We as a family want to thank you for the privilege my husband had as an international construction worker. Even though none of us were able to go with him, his experience has benefited the whole family. It shows us how unified Jehovah's organization is everywhere. Also, it helped him see how we can simplify our lives so that we, as a family, can serve Jehovah more fully."

came by in his car and saw what was happening. He excitedly rushed down to the office and said, "Boys, they are making it!"

All the officials felt embarrassed and agreed that they should apologize in some way. One staff member was the conductor of a band consisting of

employees in the municipal offices. He suggested that on Saturday they march to the building site and play for Jehovah's Witnesses, "apologizing" in this way. All agreed. So the 180 brothers were surprised to see a band marching up the street and onto the building site, playing several melodies for their enjoyment.

'LEGALLY ESTABLISHING THE GOOD NEWS'

The past service year has been one packed with action. Our brothers have faced the challenge to establish legally the preaching of the good news. —Phil. 1:7.

Concerning the South Pacific islands of *Vanuatu*, the *New Caledonia* branch office writes about an outstanding legal victory over the issue of the building of a Kingdom Hall. The Council of Protestant Churches strongly opposed this project. Despite the fact that the brothers had obtained a lease for the land and had made all the specific plans to get a building permit, they received a letter from the government stating that because of the opposition of the churches, it would be impossible to build such facilities. A letter was written to the prime minister about this problem. Months passed before the local congregation received a reply from the prime minister that allowed the construction to proceed.

More and more, a person's religious beliefs are being used as a wedge to influence court decisions in child-custody cases. In *Alaska*, for example, an unbelieving husband requested custody of a child because he did not want his son raised as one of Jehovah's Witnesses. Our sister explains:

"When I did choose to serve Jehovah whole-souled, my husband filed for divorce. He was against our belief on the proper use of blood. [Acts 15:28, 29] My attorney wasn't too agreeable about our stand on blood either, but by my using the book *Reasoning From the Scriptures*, she became very sympathetic on that issue. She stated that now even she would think three or more times before giving her own children blood. She asked if the *Reasoning* book could be used in court. So while I was on the witness stand, I used the information from the *Reasoning* book almost word for word. The outcome? I was granted custody of my son. The following day, the judge issued a court order stating that when my son was visiting his father, in case of an accident his father had to tell medical personnel that my son was of the Jehovah's Witnesses faith and that they had to seek alternate blood methods."

In the *United States*, the Society's Legal Department makes available to those Kingdom publishers facing a child-custody case a packet of information containing favorable legal decisions and suggestions on trial techniques. The packet has been instrumental in helping some publishers who faced divorce action from opposing mates to retain the custody of their children. Writes one publisher: "I felt that the packet of legal cases was an encouragement to me in that it showed very clearly how Jehovah provides and cares for his servants on earth. Also, I appreciated the suggestions in handling the trial, which proved beneficial."

The *Canada* branch reports: "We won ten

child-custody cases either by court decision or by negotiated settlement." The cases were conducted to protect the rights of the believing parents to give religious instruction to their offspring and to take them to congregation meetings—rights that some unbelieving parents and lower court judges tried to deny. Our brothers have also defended 11 cases wherein doctors have tried to force blood transfusions on patients. One case involved an adult and the others involved minors whose parents had wanted alternative medical treatment.

In **Denmark**, two non-Witness doctors writing in *Ugeskrift for læger* (Medical Weekly) have taken up the question of Jehovah's Witnesses and blood transfusion. The doctors requested clear guidelines from the responsible authorities. Although the health authorities have not wished to do this, they have indicated that there will be no official prosecution against doctors who wish to respect the Witnesses' refusal of blood, even if the patient should die.

Bitter confrontations with certain doctors and hospitals over blood transfusion still occur in **Korea**. But there have been a few breakthroughs. In its issue of October 20, 1986, the medical newspaper *Hu Saing Bo* reported the successful case of open-heart surgery without blood on an eight-year-old son of one of Jehovah's Witnesses. Dr. Park Young-kwan said: "Too much blood has been used in open-heart surgery in Korea until today. We have to develop the method in this country to perform open-heart surgery with as little blood as possible or completely without blood." The news

article mentioned that the Buchun Sejong Hospital is planning to provide open-heart surgery without the use of blood for any patient. It is encouraging to know that successful open-heart operations have been performed on children of Jehovah's Witnesses.

Legal battles may be lost or won in the courts. What counts, though, is who wins the final battle. That outcome is certain. There can be only one winner—Jehovah God, whose name and word will be vindicated.



AFRICA SPEAKS OUT!

The psalmist said: "Out of the mouth of children and sucklings you have founded strength." (Ps. 8:2) Eight-year-old Moses, of **Sierra Leone**, is a fine example of this. He enjoys the field ministry and often makes his own arrangements to work along with others in the congregation. But something bothered him. He always had to borrow magazines and brochures for use in service. How, though, could he get his own literature, since his parents did not give him any spending money?

Without discussing his dilemma with anyone, he decided on a way—he would save some of his school lunch money! After three days, he had saved enough funds for three brochures. What will he do with the money when he places the brochures? “Why, I’ll take it to the Kingdom Hall and get some more!” replies Moses.

“Aglow with the spirit” well describes Jehovah’s people in *Liberia*. (Rom. 12:11) They saw a new peak of publishers with 1,576 reporting—a 20-percent increase over last year’s average. The Memorial attendance of 8,254 is an exciting barometer of the degree of interest in the Kingdom message in the land.

A stimulus to greater acts of service was the dedication of their new branch office last March. A new sports stadium built by the Chinese was selected for the dedication program. This was the first time that the facility had been used for a religious event. How would the atheistic Chinese management respond? Upon seeing the way the 2,126 attenders comported themselves, one management representative said: “We can see you people have done this kind of thing before. You are welcome to come back anytime.”

Two days before the Memorial, a congregation in Liberia was faced with a real problem. Their usual meeting place was booked for a worldly event, and the only alternative was an empty hall with no chairs. Over 400 were expected to attend, so the brothers approached the local school system where they had borrowed chairs before. Their request was flatly refused. Too many chairs had been stolen by

other groups, they were told. One time a religious group had left the chairs outdoors for an entire weekend.

Appeals from our brothers failed. The authorities were adamant. Finally, after field service, a group of brothers called on the superintendent of the school system to make one last appeal. A brother explained to her that Jehovah’s Witnesses are well organized and honest, and that at our assemblies it is not uncommon for someone losing ten cents to recover it at the Lost and Found Department. Surely there would be no problem if the chairs were used by Jehovah’s Witnesses on this occasion, he reasoned.

Despite this plea, the superintendent remained unmoved. At this moment the silence was broken when the six-and-a-half-year-old nephew of one of the brothers ran in from the superintendent’s front yard, saying with excitement that he had found money in the yard. He handed five dollars to his uncle, who turned it over to the flabbergasted superintendent. “If any of my own children had found this money,” she confessed, “they would have pocketed it, viewing it as their ‘good luck’ from God.”

The brothers were permitted to use all the chairs available. She was going to relate this act of honesty to her religious prayer group, and if any other religion asked her why she allowed our brothers use of the chairs, she would reply that Jehovah’s Witnesses were honest, and she knew they would take good care of them. The 474 in attendance enjoyed the Memorial, and all the chairs were returned that same night.

1987 SERVICE YEAR REPORT OF

Letter and number following each country's name indicates the country's

Country or Territory	Population	1987 Peak Pubs.	Ratio, One Pub- lisher to:	1987 Av. Pubs.	% Inc. Over 1986
Alaska (A-31)	514,000	1,890	272	1,820	-3*
Algeria (H-6)	22,200,000	41	541,463	37	
American Samoa (N-29)	36,960	111	333	101	31
Andorra (E-6)	46,976	110	427	104	6
Anguilla (J-42)	6,524	18	362	15	-6*
Antigua (J-43)	70,794	229	309	218	3
Argentina (P-42)	31,497,000	67,225	469	64,862	9
Aruba (J-42)	64,539	402	161	379	10
Australia (O-22)	16,089,900	46,170	348	44,649	4
Austria (E-7)	7,555,338	17,056	443	16,714	3
Azores (F-2)	261,300	360	726	346	5
Bahamas (H-41)	209,505	877	239	852	8
Bangladesh (H-17)	103,000,000	25	4,120,000	22	16
Barbados (J-43)	265,000	1,598	166	1,551	3
Belau (K-22)	13,000	50	260	43	-7*
Belgium (D-6)	9,794,751	22,620	433	21,834	2
Belize (J-39)	171,000	773	221	729	5
Benin (K-6)	4,005,000	1,752	2,286	1,565	5
Bermuda (G-42)	54,050	341	159	329	
Bolivia (N-42)	6,650,000	5,514	1,206	4,979	11
Bonaire (J-42)	10,456	60	174	55	12
Botswana (O-9)	1,224,056	510	2,400	466	8
Brazil (M-43)	141,302,000	216,216	654	203,405	10
Britain (C-5)	55,326,500	109,624	505	105,082	3
Brunei (K-20)	225,000	12	18,750	8	60
Burkina Faso (K-5)	7,318,695	361	20,273	340	18
Burma (H-18)	37,000,000	1,540	24,026	1,456	8
Canada (B-37)	25,309,300	90,080	281	87,459	4
Cape Verde Islands (J-3)	310,000	277	1,119	244	15
Cayman Islands (H-40)	16,821	66	255	60	11
Central Afr. Rep. (K-8)	2,746,485	1,248	2,201	1,166	
Chad (J-8)	4,000,000	196	20,408	186	8
Chile (O-41)	12,536,383	30,988	405	29,346	6
Colombia (K-41)	29,481,842	34,261	861	30,857	12
Congo (L-8)	1,750,000	1,256	1,393	1,103	2
Cook Islands (N-31)	17,000	108	157	90	14
Costa Rica (K-40)	2,640,912	10,722	246	10,067	7
Côte d'Ivoire (Ivory Coast) (K-5)	9,273,167	2,584	3,589	2,478	12
Curaçao (J-42)	171,590	1,420	121	1,363	8
Cyprus (G-10)	620,000	1,140	544	1,126	3
Denmark (C-7)	5,124,772	15,626	328	15,087	2
Dominica (J-43)	81,000	247	328	230	4
Dominican Rep. (J-41)	5,647,977	10,403	543	9,929	7
Ecuador (L-40)	9,922,514	11,654	851	11,195	12
El Salvador (J-39)	5,401,320	16,041	337	15,232	5
Equatorial Guinea (L-7)	312,120	159	1,963	144	1
Faeroe Islands (H-5)	46,312	97	477	87	2
Falkland Islands (S-43)	2,000	6	333	5	25
Fiji (N-28)	730,827	1,335	547	1,254	14
Finland (A-9)	4,926,197	16,691	295	16,012	3

JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES WORLDWIDE

location on endsheet maps. Nos. 1-25 front and Nos. 22-46 back endsheet.

1986 Av. Pubs.	1987 No. Bptztd.	Av. Pio. Pubs.	No. of Cong.	Total Hours	Av. Bible Studies	Memorial Atten- dance
1,868	105	241	25	371,095	1,111	4,449
37	5	1	3	2,030	38	82
77	8	12	1	22,662	128	433
98	6	6	1	15,925	62	273
16		2	1	4,502	13	62
212	7	34	4	52,723	228	605
59,348	5,779	9,055	998	15,718,851	82,003	170,120
345	31	43	5	85,641	469	1,203
42,998	2,159	4,989	610	9,434,752	23,726	89,517
16,185	911	1,359	238	3,139,087	9,179	30,384
331	29	39	12	77,620	355	1,027
791	74	159	16	242,624	1,400	2,877
19	1	6	1	6,719	39	79
1,501	90	179	16	316,290	1,725	4,803
46	3	15	1	21,503	137	212
21,343	1,092	1,839	305	4,111,261	10,438	45,466
695	76	109	18	197,223	1,032	3,928
1,491	49	114	64	304,632	1,744	9,005
330	16	55	4	84,828	296	906
4,467	681	1,003	96	1,635,223	8,007	21,778
49	10	6	1	12,367	99	215
430	29	72	18	127,072	606	1,711
185,126	18,467	20,390	3,328	38,667,254	235,811	657,784
101,863	5,948	12,036	1,231	21,571,972	55,165	209,172
5				353	8	53
288	71	89	15	140,009	759	1,402
1,342	88	242	73	398,667	1,330	3,795
84,343	4,329	9,135	1,210	16,790,200	44,729	168,303
212	32	30	7	69,763	434	1,415
54	2	5	1	11,929	73	188
1,170	41	140	40	249,669	1,250	4,042
172	17	50	9	78,051	416	1,228
27,585	2,450	3,651	327	6,835,811	44,646	95,664
27,587	3,381	4,452	508	8,023,835	50,641	144,449
1,084	49	91	47	238,572	1,807	4,725
79	9	16	4	23,655	106	350
9,433	597	889	193	2,022,547	12,513	30,534
2,207	187	491	75	857,057	4,923	11,284
1,265	125	173	13	327,339	2,088	4,138
1,096	55	122	15	216,726	554	2,427
14,796	531	1,225	238	2,383,994	5,444	24,935
222	6	35	7	64,170	264	1,018
9,307	884	1,471	151	2,533,549	17,937	39,108
10,013	1,011	1,687	160	3,039,508	20,549	58,043
14,546	1,251	2,087	295	3,900,960	22,316	58,933
143	26	34	4	50,531	328	466
85	1	23	4	27,974	58	153
4				446	3	11
1,098	94	269	29	418,123	1,663	4,397
15,533	562	1,932	267	3,090,616	8,294	26,875

Country or Territory	Population	1987 Peak Pubs.	Ratio, One Pub- lisher to:	1987 Av. Pubs.	% Inc. Over 1986
France (E-6)	55,500,000	96,954	572	94,180	5
French Guiana (K-44)	84,177	511	165	463	16
Gabon (L-7)	1,150,000	584	1,969	553	11
Gambia (J-4)	750,000	26	28,846	23	28
Germany, F. R.; W. Berlin (D-7)	61,140,500	121,273	504	118,318	2
Ghana (K-6)	13,182,575	32,614	404	30,430	6
Gibraltar (F-5)	29,166	133	219	127	2
Greece (F-9)	9,740,417	23,380	417	23,161	2
Greenland (A-44)	53,733	96	560	91	7
Grenada (J-43)	112,000	358	313	345	1
Guadeloupe (J-43)	328,000	5,143	64	4,914	12
Guam (J-24)	118,338	270	438	257	6
Guatemala (J-39)	8,000,000	9,598	634	9,200	10
Guinea (K-4)	5,143,284	206	24,967	152	1
Guinea-Bissau (K-4)	900,000	6	150,000	5	150
Guyana (K-43)	842,000	1,353	622	1,317	-2*
Haiti (J-41)	6,000,000	4,894	1,226	4,598	9
Hawaii (H-31)	1,062,300	5,567	191	5,453	2
Honduras (J-39)	4,516,661	4,830	935	4,550	9
Hong Kong (H-20)	5,300,000	1,571	3,374	1,515	11
Iceland (A-3)	244,009	202	1,208	188	9
India (H-15)	830,000,000	8,077	102,761	7,721	7
Ireland (D-5)	5,103,995	2,690	1,897	2,591	5
Israel (G-10)	5,743,600	343	16,745	333	5
Italy (E-7)	57,202,345	149,870	382	145,610	8
Jamaica (J-41)	2,300,000	8,142	282	7,852	3
Japan (F-23)	121,371,798	120,722	1,005	117,308	8
Kenya (L-10)	21,800,000	4,373	4,985	4,081	11
Kiribati (L-27)	63,843	16	3,990	15	25
Korea, Republic of (F-21)	42,082,000	48,438	869	46,211	11
Kosrae (K-26)	6,005	25	240	23	-4*
Lebanon (G-10)	2,619,000	2,448	1,070	2,361	6
Lesotho (P-9)	1,577,000	1,044	1,511	902	14
Liberia (K-5)	2,200,000	1,576	1,396	1,446	10
Libya (H-8)	3,637,488	10	363,749	5	
Liechtenstein (E-7)	27,399	49	559	45	5
Luxembourg (D-6)	433,500	1,308	331	1,268	3
Macao (H-20)	400,000	25	16,000	22	16
Madagascar (N-12)	10,264,704	2,598	3,951	2,424	13
Madeira (G-4)	270,000	547	494	517	7
Malaysia (K-19)	16,347,000	859	19,030	835	6
Mali (J-6)	7,800,000	63	123,810	58	16
Malta (F-7)	383,000	319	1,201	302	2
Marquesas Islands (M-33)	6,548	3	2,183	2	New
Marshall Islands (K-27)	33,113	174	190	145	-3*
Martinique (J-43)	333,275	2,294	145	2,208	10
Mauritania (J-4)	2,000,000	2	1,000,000	2	New
Mauritius (N-13)	1,003,000	798	1,257	765	1
Mayotte (N-11)	68,000	19	3,579	18	
Mexico (H-38)	81,163,256	222,168	365	210,536	13

1986 Av. Pubs.	1987 No. Bptzd.	Av. Plo. Pubs.	No. of Cong.	Total Hours	Av. Bible Studies	Memorial Atten- dance
89,785	6,571	8,750	1,296	19,910,975	59,138	198,797
400	34	67	5	137,194	979	1,675
499	46	53	13	130,435	1,214	2,163
18	1	8	1	14,100	61	99
116,152	4,770	8,284	1,624	20,791,334	54,727	211,306
28,635	2,281	4,726	548	7,977,112	52,673	133,754
124	5	9	1	19,501	47	202
22,815	849	2,365	323	4,417,769	9,339	41,894
85	2	18	7	26,324	78	194
340	10	55	7	82,229	412	1,216
4,397	515	312	53	947,062	7,094	14,703
243	28	53	2	79,722	445	1,143
8,401	812	1,037	153	2,098,482	11,383	36,907
151	22	25	11	47,630	189	745
2		3	1	3,755	19	35
1,346	68	231	30	325,419	1,584	5,181
4,220	417	534	83	1,152,752	8,453	29,598
5,353	225	846	71	1,296,927	4,471	14,897
4,161	341	688	82	1,274,670	7,957	23,160
1,360	157	402	19	603,304	2,523	3,583
173	16	24	4	40,632	150	448
7,184	718	873	284	1,628,819	5,041	21,310
2,472	126	544	81	843,717	1,548	5,494
316	18	36	6	73,727	261	719
134,677	11,867	24,735	2,281	40,899,475	104,543	340,909
7,620	442	839	171	1,507,432	8,372	27,397
108,702	9,211	49,503	1,934	57,151,828	159,499	277,553
3,686	466	1,021	105	1,580,774	6,876	15,683
12	1	5	1	8,681	24	146
41,751	5,125	17,743	789	19,922,627	55,086	102,662
24		3	1	4,679	42	214
2,230	164	258	51	539,896	1,942	5,302
791	67	177	42	270,020	1,096	4,204
1,318	118	312	33	504,257	2,855	8,254
5				489	6	34
43		6	1	9,315	33	88
1,246	45	102	20	240,473	860	2,887
19		5	1	8,985	32	58
2,146	241	305	37	626,611	5,535	13,382
483	37	39	11	95,350	520	1,433
790	48	140	20	253,400	1,467	2,397
50	8	31	1	50,915	238	299
297	22	29	4	60,210	215	600
		1	1	2,613	7	10
150	2	37	2	46,865	375	1,192
2,005	246	278	24	534,841	2,799	6,206
		1		346	4	11
759	65	78	9	157,820	784	1,929
18		4	1	8,432	41	65
186,291	31,703	32,150	6,482	54,778,546	349,527	957,081

Country or Territory	Population	1987 Peak Pubs.	Ratio, One Pub- lisher to:	1987 Av. Pubs.	% Inc. Over 1986
Montserrat (J-42)	13,076	35	374	32	
Morocco (G-5)	24,300,000	78	311,638	65	-8*
Nauru (L-26)	6,000	8	750	5	-17*
Nepal (G-16)	16,480,000	49	336,327	46	18
Netherlands (D-6)	14,615,125	29,170	501	28,524	1
Nevis (J-42)	15,482	38	407	35	-3*
New Caledonia (N-26)	155,000	917	169	868	10
New Zealand (Q-27)	3,319,600	10,369	320	9,621	5
Niger (J-7)	6,491,000	96	67,615	83	17
Nigeria (K-7)	102,900,000	133,899	768	126,450	4
Niue (N-29)	2,500	18	139	15	
Norway (A-7)	4,184,491	8,482	493	8,207	4
Pakistan (G-14)	98,000,000	248	395,161	43	2
Panama (K-40)	2,274,448	5,034	452	4,755	6
Papua New Guinea (L-23)	3,006,799	1,934	1,555	1,832	6
Paraguay (O-43)	3,457,362	2,470	1,400	2,379	6
Peru (M-41)	20,400,000	26,387	773	24,121	12
Philippines (J-21)	57,000,000	101,735	560	94,095	7
Ponape (K-25)	28,000	63	444	58	-6*
Portugal (F-5)	9,731,300	32,010	304	31,189	5
Puerto Rico (J-42)	3,400,000	22,468	151	22,043	4
Réunion (O-13)	560,000	1,311	427	1,246	14
Rodrigues (N-14)	36,618	28	1,308	24	4
Rota (J-24)	1,500	11	136	9	29
Saba (J-42)	972	4	243	4	
St. Eustatius (J-42)	1,335	6	223	5	-17*
St. Helena (N-5)	6,000	111	54	107	10
St. Kitts (J-42)	36,538	162	226	145	2
St. Lucia (J-43)	130,000	340	382	312	3
St. Maarten (J-42)	15,926	109	146	99	24
St. Pierre & Miquelon (D-43)	6,000	12	500	10	11
St. Vincent (J-43)	120,000	178	674	156	3
Saipan (J-24)	20,350	58	351	45	41
San Marino (E-7)	21,240	100	212	96	12
São Tomé (L-7)	100,000	30	3,333	23	77
Senegal (J-4)	6,800,000	507	13,412	481	7
Seychelles (L-13)	66,000	73	904	65	14
Sierra Leone (K-4)	3,517,530	708	4,968	639	1
Solomon Islands (M-26)	276,262	728	379	681	5
South Africa (P-9)	34,089,207	42,509	802	40,456	6
South-West Africa (O-8)	1,184,000	460	2,574	416	13
Spain (F-5)	38,832,262	69,539	558	67,427	6
Sri Lanka (K-16)	16,200,000	1,086	14,917	1,040	13
Suriname (K-43)	350,000	1,261	278	1,216	4
Swaziland (O-10)	669,734	1,003	668	926	8
Sweden (A-8)	8,399,095	21,046	399	20,787	2
Switzerland (E-7)	6,572,900	14,229	462	13,917	4
Tahiti (N-32)	178,281	794	225	768	12
Taiwan (H-20)	20,000,000	1,336	14,970	1,266	13
Tanzania (M-10)	23,700,000	2,800	8,464	2,646	9

1986 Av. Pubs.	1987 No. Bptzd.	Av. Plo. Pubs.	No. of Cong.	Total Hours	Av. Bible Studies	Memorial Atten- dance
32		3	1	5,466	20	114
71	5	7	3	14,918	49	194
6				296	4	57
39		6	1	10,400	38	155
28,367	1,038	2,134	313	4,560,000	9,536	50,846
36	1	7	1	12,289	54	121
789	97	83	9	196,180	1,012	2,717
9,165	587	1,216	140	2,045,059	6,003	20,800
71	4	17	5	30,338	152	365
121,670	5,647	13,310	2,464	27,057,216	148,345	429,251
15	2	3	1	2,974	27	66
7,929	423	529	175	1,174,982	3,184	15,804
231	43	6		69,767	379	849
4,480	258	625	100	1,150,180	7,666	18,888
1,732	133	210	89	420,216	2,288	10,235
2,251	109	404	36	631,682	3,020	6,040
21,471	2,571	5,204	486	7,967,813	38,863	104,684
88,174	8,084	19,906	2,658	25,468,632	74,654	294,712
82	2	15	1	19,756	130	553
29,617	2,115	2,361	438	5,298,900	22,861	82,807
21,231	1,236	2,254	275	4,501,105	19,205	54,221
1,093	86	154	14	311,171	1,327	3,481
23		5	1	9,088	47	70
7	1	4	1	6,076	20	41
4		3		3,437	25	17
6		1		1,025	9	45
97	7	5	2	14,922	65	300
142	3	19	2	35,596	189	432
302	12	49	5	77,389	397	1,257
80	7	11	2	20,446	103	417
9		2	1	2,391	5	20
152	8	26	4	45,099	177	533
32	5	15	1	21,589	117	188
86	1	9	2	22,167	50	209
13	5		1	3,797	69	108
451	46	126	14	213,108	995	1,447
57	6	6	1	15,111	89	220
635	22	133	30	214,028	1,005	3,184
649	23	71	30	139,524	653	3,565
38,291	2,511	5,196	993	9,535,298	41,003	124,234
368	38	49	12	99,190	503	1,318
63,453	5,279	9,270	980	16,477,856	48,263	154,768
924	105	191	31	323,386	1,354	3,754
1,167	132	169	18	309,806	1,489	4,225
860	58	234	44	355,418	1,333	3,419
20,350	821	2,489	326	3,985,305	10,510	36,855
13,373	783	946	263	2,524,881	8,805	26,970
683	76	84	11	184,396	1,066	2,216
1,121	108	330	21	454,626	1,695	3,794
2,425	281	491	84	816,025	2,657	8,529

Country or Territory	Population	1987 Peak Pubs.	Ratio, One Pub- lisher to:	1987 Av. Pubs.	% Inc. Over 1986
Thailand (J-18)	52,969,204	946	55,993	913	3
Togo (K-6)	3,025,420	3,366	899	3,023	7
Tokelau Islands (M-29)	1,692	6	282	4	
Tonga (N-29)	94,535	61	1,550	52	33
Trinidad (K-43)	1,197,332	4,893	245	4,682	8
Truk (K-24)	50,229	42	1,196	38	6
Tunisia (G-7)	7,300,000	52	140,385	44	-2*
Turkey (F-10)	50,000,000	851	58,754	823	4
Turks & Caicos Isls. (H-41)	8,000	40	200	38	15
Tuvalu (M-28)	9,000	24	375	19	-17*
Uganda (L-10)	16,000,000	401	39,900	369	19
U.S. of America (F-38)	240,940,000	773,219	312	734,378	3
Uruguay (P-43)	2,921,000	6,212	470	5,956	6
Vanuatu (N-27)	140,000	88	1,591	83	-1*
Venezuela (K-42)	19,055,000	38,490	495	36,035	14
Virgin Isls. (Brit.) (J-42)	12,000	102	118	94	4
Virgin Isls. (U.S.) (J-42)	96,000	506	190	467	1
Wallis & Futuna Isls. (N-28)	14,000	2	7,000	2	
Western Samoa (M-29)	158,940	178	893	152	3
Yap (K-23)	9,320	30	311	28	4
Zaire (L-9)	34,500,000	38,109	905	33,430	-6*
Zambia (N-9)	7,257,000	67,144	108	63,281	10
Zimbabwe (N-9)	8,488,791	15,448	550	14,726	1
173 Countries	3,116,916		2,970,455	5.8	
# 37 Other Countries	278,696		267,296	4.3	
GRAND TOTAL (210 countries)	3,395,612		3,237,751	5.7	

During the 1987 service year the Watch Tower Society spent \$26,864,296.11 in caring for special pioneers, missionaries, and traveling overseers in their field service assignments.

In *South Africa* a former persecutor of Jehovah's Witnesses has embraced the truth. One day when this man and his friends were discussing politics, a brother politely interrupted their conversation and introduced them to the Bible's viewpoint on the subject. The men, eager for more information, bombarded him with questions. One of the men showed keen interest in the Bible's answers. When the brother visited him at his house, he said: "I really want to read the Bible, but who can help me?" The

1986 Av. Pubs.	1987 No. Bptztd.	Av. Pio. Pubs.	No. of Cong.	Total Hours	Av. Bible Studies	Memorial Atten- dance
883	38	171	32	271,895	995	2,302
2,822	32	268	64	649,948	5,949	12,841
4			1	431	3	43
39	7	13	2	20,858	82	216
4,335	360	833	54	1,213,966	6,720	16,292
36	2	12	2	19,093	151	609
45	3	3	1	6,483	30	89
795	30	65	10	163,683	549	1,522
33	3	9	1	15,784	95	149
23	4	4	1	5,219	29	208
310	53	96	11	146,654	886	2,036
710,344	39,189	94,856	8,547	155,191,882	509,502	1,778,066
5,596	534	809	94	1,390,285	8,415	18,220
84	12	14	2	26,122	199	665
31,691	4,050	6,243	375	10,543,490	61,380	148,843
90	20	8	3	20,452	140	321
464	11	48	8	94,005	499	1,765
2				181		8
148	16	28	3	47,017	148	636
27		8	1	10,828	53	155
35,680	2,716	5,614	1,063	8,433,065	47,196	82,069
57,624	4,933	6,493	1,715	12,426,151	79,384	381,129
14,557	1,119	1,506	521	3,071,855	13,973	51,925
2,807,004	215,166	423,383	50,024	701,836,058	2,807,388	8,442,050
256,285	15,677	12,796	4,887	37,183,228	197,660	523,171
3,063,289	230,843	436,179	54,911	739,019,286	3,005,048	8,965,221

MEMORIAL PARTAKERS WORLDWIDE: 8,808

* Percentage of decrease

* Work banned and reports are incomplete

brother arranged for a Bible study using the Zulu-language edition of the book *You Can Live Forever in Paradise on Earth*. Soon the man sheepishly confessed to the brother that some years previously he had lived in a country where Jehovah's Witnesses were banned. While serving as a soldier in the army of that country, he persecuted the Witnesses. Now the truth has changed his life. He has become a zealous Kingdom proclaimer, who is happy to be carrying a satchel of Bible literature instead of guns.



ASIA 'PRAISES JAH'

"Praise Jah, you people!" is the ringing cry ending the book of Psalms. (Ps. 150:6) Read the following experiences to see how the lands of Asia have ended their service year with such a joyous shout too.

The **Hong Kong** branch observed an interesting trend during the past service year. Publishers are more alert to opportunities to speak the truth, and as a result, people not only are listening but are quick to show appreciation. Interested ones regularly attend meetings soon after starting to study the Bible. For example, the father of a young man died. In connection with matters relating to the death, the young man and his mother went to the office that had employed his father. Noting the young man's grief, a brother working in the office spoke to him about the hope of the resurrection and gave him a copy of the book *Is This Life All There Is?* Not long after this, another publisher called at the young man's door and placed with him the book *You Can Live Forever in Paradise on Earth*. The young man eagerly read the entire book and decided to attend a meeting at the Kingdom Hall. He was impressed with the warm reception he received and agreed to a home Bible study. After studying for

Worldwide Report

43

one month, he is regularly attending meetings. Furthermore, he has now read the book *Life—How Did It Get Here? By Evolution or by Creation?* and is currently reading the book *Worldwide Security Under the "Prince of Peace."*

An elderly pioneer sister from **Japan** regards the hospital waiting room as her territory. What theocratic strategy does she use? She sits and reads the Society's publications, waiting for some curious person to stop and ask what her books are about. One day a voice behind her said, "What do I have to do to get a copy?" She turned and saw a young man of college age. He had been peering over her shoulder, trying to read the booklet *In Search of a Father*. "You see, I too am searching for my father," he explained. The sister gave him the booklet and promised to meet him again at the hospital. A few days later she met him again. This time she encouraged him to read about another Father, Jehovah God. When contacting the young man after several months, she was surprised and elated to learn that he had found two fathers—one, his natural father and the other, the almighty God Jehovah. The young man, his mother, and his father now found practical admonition in the booklet. As a result, the whole family began to study the Bible with the Witnesses.

"This has been a banner year for us," declares the **Taiwan** branch. Their average increase in publishers is 13 percent—the highest percentage of increase for the branch since 1959! Kingdom Halls built in several places a year ago are now filled to capacity.

In order to progress spiritually, newly associated

ones must be willing to make adjustments in their lives. To illustrate: Several women who worked at the same factory started studying with missionaries. The truth's effect soon became apparent. They refused to work overtime on meeting nights, a thing unheard of in most factories, where employees work long hours. However, their honesty and exemplary work habits soon earned them more responsibilities. They were assigned the trusted duty of keeping production records.

A problem arose in the factory when all the Bible students applied for the same vacation days in order to attend the district convention. The solution? The women agreed to come back to the factory each day after the convention and work for an hour at night. The company offered the women a full day's wage for this service, but the women refused because they had asked for the vacation time to attend the convention and did not want to take a day's wage for an hour's work.

After their baptism, they desired to pioneer and so left that full-time job in an effort to find work with a more suitable schedule. Their former boss, though, approached the sisters and offered them each three days of work per week and agreed to their terms of "no overtime on meeting nights and days off for conventions." The company figured that it would save money by rehiring the sisters. How so? Because they could work well without a supervisor. Also, they would not steal. The boss concluded that if the Witnesses are that faithful to their God, then surely they would be trustworthy in the company also.

The *Philippines* branch reports: "From the is-

land of Mindanao comes this experience of keeping integrity in one's place of work. A young sister in the city of Davao was working in the office of the mayor as a secretary. She was conscientious in her work, reporting early and not loitering at her job. However, her position was not permanent, so after a period of time it came up for review. The immediate head of her department did not recommend her for continued employment in that position. Instead, he offered her a higher position, provided she would have an immoral relationship with him. This she flatly refused even though it would mean the loss of her employment. She placed full faith in Jehovah and was rewarded. Her good secular work came to the attention of other officials. They moved her to another government office with a higher position and salary."

Malaysia is registering new peaks in most features of service. Although the political and economic situation is unsettled, sincere sheeplike ones are hearing the voice of the Fine Shepherd. For example, a Bible study was started with a Eurasian lady and her sons. They lived in poverty because her husband was unable to support the family. Also, since childhood, her eldest son had been possessed by demons. For help, the mother often consulted the Chinese Taoist mediums and Malay medicine men (*bomohs*). As a matter of fact, to protect themselves against demon attacks, all in the family, including the father, wore a talisman (*tangkal*). When the family realized that Jehovah dislikes anything even smacking of spiritism, all removed their "protective" charms immediately except the father. That was a mistake. The father again came under

demon attack. This time, though, the mother called out Jehovah's name and prayed aloud for half an hour. Finally, the attack stopped. Thereafter, the father also removed his *tangkal*. One week later he found a job, and things began to turn around financially for the family. The man and woman also realized that they had to legalize their marriage, and the whole family is now progressing well in the truth.

The bursts of hot warfare disrupting the peacefulness of **Sri Lanka** have not dampened the spirit of Jehovah's Witnesses in that country. They have enjoyed a 13-percent increase in the average number of Kingdom proclaimers. True, the conflict brought loss of belongings to some of the Witnesses, but so far, none have suffered physical harm. By adjusting the times and places to fit the circumstances and the governmental curfews, all congregation meetings have been held. This included circuit assemblies and district conventions as well as a pioneer school in the war-torn north.

Publishers, though, in the war zones of the north and east have had a number of narrow escapes. People have dug trenches and have covered them over with sandbags so that when bombs are falling and machine guns are firing from helicopters, they have places to hide. Religious and caste differences are quickly forgotten as people dive into these shelters for protection. During one bombing, Hindus huddled in a trench were shouting to their god Muragah for help. One who had learned about Jehovah told them to call out to Jehovah because he is the only God who could save them. This they all quickly did.

Also in Sri Lanka, a young pioneer called on an elderly Methodist who objected to her visit by saying, "How can a youngster like you teach me the Bible?" The pioneer replied: "Really, I didn't come to teach but to share with you something I learned that made me so happy I just have to tell others." The pioneer's response aroused the old man's interest. "Then tell me, what did you learn?" he asked. "I have learned how to live forever," answered the pioneer. The pioneer was invited in and Scriptural matters were discussed at length. Now the elderly man is studying the Bible with the pioneer.



LATIN AMERICA 'DOES THE WORK OF AN EVANGELIZER'

"Active" is a word that well describes our brothers living in the countries of Central and South America. They have been very busy 'doing the work of an evangelizer' this past service year, as the following experiences clearly show.—2 Tim. 4:5.

Brazil chalks up another year of expansion both in the number of Kingdom proclaimers and, more

importantly, in the quality of their ministry. Memorial attendance was 23-percent higher than in 1986, with 657,784 persons in attendance. Six new peaks of publishers were reached, with a final peak of 216,216. There was also a peak of 261,423 home Bible studies conducted.

Quality was evident in the increasing number of Kingdom proclaimers entering full-time service and in publishers traveling to open up new territories. Ten peaks in regular pioneers were registered during the year. More than 750 publishers spent weekends and vacations in at least 110 previously unworked towns, with amazing results. Thousands of pieces of literature were placed, dozens of Bible studies started, and a number of public talks given. The following letter is a typical reaction of interested persons in these areas:

"I'm very happy that you sent two young ladies to my town, since it enabled me to get to know Jehovah's organization. They were a real blessing to me from Jehovah. I'm sorry to learn that they will soon be leaving us. Please, dear brothers, if at all possible, let them stay with us a little longer. —R.M.P."

A highlight of this service year for Brazil was the release of the new, large-print *New World Translation Reference Bible* in Portuguese. Several newspapers and magazines carried articles about it. *Veja*, a well-known newsmagazine in São Paulo, published an article with the heading: "JEHOVAH'S BIBLE—The most complete version of the Scriptures released," stating in part:

"Last week, Jehovah's Witnesses released in Bra-

zil the Bible with the most abundant marginal notes and parallel texts on record. Entitled *The New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures*, the work was organized in the United States with the aid of computers and edited in a single volume of 1,600 pages. In Brazil, [the new Bible] has an initial printing of 50,000 copies, which is excellent. A good national edition has an average of 5,000 copies."

The magazines printed in four colors are producing fine results in Brazil. Never before has the branch received so many subscriptions: 49,154 in one month. Vicente, a train engineer, travels a lot of the time and is limited in his door-to-door ministry. He read in *The Watchtower* that a sister had placed 59 subscriptions by offering them to her workmates. So he decided to try it. He set his goal at ten subscriptions for April. "I got a real shock," he wrote. "I reached my goal in two days! So I raised it to 20 but reached that in seven days. A third goal of 30 was reached by the middle of the month. So I set my goal to place as many as did the sister whose experience I had read. Imagine my joy when I was able to report 68 subscriptions for the month!"

Another brother, on hearing the elders encourage auxiliary pioneer service, applied for it in March. He enjoyed it so much that he continued in April and placed 79 subscriptions in the two months, most of them at his place of work.

Even a four-year-old child did her part. A friend came to visit her family for a few days. One day the visitor felt like reading and complained, "Is there nothing to read in this house?" The young Witness,

with hands on her hips, retorted, "So there's nothing to read in this house? Just wait a minute." She ran to her mother's room, climbed up on a chair, and got a stack of her mother's magazines, *The Watchtower* and *Awake!* She took them to the visitor and said, "Now see if there is nothing to read!" The friend enjoyed them so much that the youngster said: "If you want to, you can receive them at home by mail." The result: two subscriptions.

Ecuador had representatives from 13 different nations working on their branch project this past service year. The high point for the volunteer construction workers was the time they spent in field service, despite the language barrier. Open-air markets, bus terminals, and the streets were ideal places for them to do witnessing. Often just displaying one of the illustrated books, such as *My Book of Bible Stories*, or a colorful brochure is sufficient to attract large crowds of people. A group of eight brothers from the construction crew preached in the market one morning and placed 73 books, 51 brochures, and 30 magazines. At another time, a group of four witnessed at the bus terminal and placed 133 brochures and 13 books. They could have placed more literature, but their supplies ran out.

An earthquake jolted San Salvador, the capital city of **El Salvador**, just as the service year got started. At least 14 brothers, as well as interested persons, were killed. Many Kingdom Halls and private homes crumbled. The quake's greatest effect on the people was, not the pain from material loss, but the emotional shock it caused. On top of this,

the continued political violence that sweeps the country burdens the people. Also, water and electricity are rationed for long periods of time, while inflation gallops away with the value of the people's money.

In this dismal atmosphere, however, the brothers are spiritually optimistic because the branch has kept them busy in theocratic works. Help was organized for congregation members who lost their homes in the earthquake. Kingdom Halls were repaired. Then December brought a big spiritual boost—four "Divine Peace" District Conventions. The total attendance was 30,003, with 521 baptized. The Memorial was attended by 58,933—almost four times greater in number than their peak of 16,041 publishers.



NORTH AMERICA AND THE ISLANDS OF THE CARIBBEAN 'BEAR WITNESS'

Whether persons are rich or poor, small or great makes no difference to Jehovah's earthly servants; they will continue to 'bear witness' to all people.

(Acts 26:22) Some householders may wonder why we keep calling after they have told us they are not interested. But there are very good reasons why we return. Consider this example from *Canada*:

A woman visited by two Witnesses made it quite clear that she wanted nothing to do with our religion. Later, while doing her housework, she began thinking about the Witnesses. Questions about our beliefs came to her mind. So she got into her car and drove up and down the streets to search for the two Witnesses. They were nowhere to be found. She then drove to her friend's house, thinking they may have visited her friend. No, they had not stopped there, she was told. Her friend did say that she worked with a Witness and offered to get the two women together. The sister who was contacted explains:

"On the initial call, much to my surprise, there were five women present, who bombarded me with such questions as, 'Why do you call yourselves Jehovah's Witnesses?' 'Why do you go from door to door?' and 'Do you believe in Jesus?' I spent three hours answering their questions. Since that initial call, I have returned an average of three times a month and have met with 5 to 15 people each time."

In a six-month period of time, our sister placed 313 magazines, 171 booklets, and 272 books with that group. But now the sister says: "I make every effort to encourage the group to take advantage of our individual home Bible study program." It will be most interesting to see what yet develops.

Schools are fertile ground for the sowing of Kingdom seeds. One young Witness from Canada says about the book *Life—How Did It Get Here? By Evolution or by Creation?*: "I decided to place it on my desk in such a way as to make it quite visible to other students. Five came over and looked at it. I pointed out its various features. Three students asked me to get them a copy. Next, I asked the school librarian if she would like one. She agreed to accept it as a donation to the library. The following day, she told me she had signed the book out already and asked for one for herself and another for a friend. Finally, my science teacher accepted two copies. The librarian has also asked for two more since then. I have found that if you put forth the effort, Jehovah will bless it. He blessed my effort with the placement of 11 books."

Youths in *Guadeloupe* are also urged to make their school a territory in which to witness to their schoolmates and teachers. However, good conduct in school is also essential. Last December, in one class pupils were assigned to recite a lesson on Christmas. A young sister declined and offered to recite a lesson on another subject. The schoolteacher became furious and led the class in mocking our sister.

But by the third quarter of the school year, conditions had changed. The teacher confessed to the mother of our young publisher: "Jehovah is with you; he protects your daughter. Not only is her conduct excellent, but she also does excellent schoolwork, achieving good averages. I want to congratulate you. You have educated your child

well. Just this afternoon I told the entire class that your daughter's God, Jehovah, is the true God and is more powerful than the gods of the other religions because your daughter's conduct is always respectful, while her schoolmates create disorder and do bad things."

The **Netherlands Antilles** is a territory of linguists. Dutch is the official language. Papiamentu is the native language, while English is the commercial language. Many people also speak Spanish because the Netherlands Antilles is a group of islands very close to the shores of Colombia and Venezuela. Thus, the average person speaks and reads several languages. "To our amazement," writes the branch office, "the island of Curaçao, with a population of 171,500, has six daily newspapers, and they all stay in business year after year. Since the people here like to read, they read our literature too. They really appreciate our lovely magazines. One of the big events of the year has been the appearance of the Papiamentu edition of *The Watchtower* in full color. No doubt this has helped us to increase our placements of magazines during the service year."

It is no wonder that **Martinique** had a Memorial attendance of almost three times the number of publishers. People in that island make rapid progress in applying the truth. For example, one week after a pioneer sister and her husband started a Bible study with a married couple, the newly interested ones attended the book study and, soon after, all the meetings. One month later they were part of the audience at the district convention. Since the man was a leader of a trade union, the organi-

zation of the convention impressed him. What a difference in decorum from his union meetings! The man also associated with a group that practiced yoga. But now he said: 'The Bible is a better therapy for calmness of mind and heart and is of so much greater help to resolve personal problems than is the practice of yoga.' Eight months after his first study, he symbolized his dedication to Jehovah by water baptism, and his wife and eldest daughter are now publishers.



EUROPE 'PROCLAIMS LIBERTY'

While the threat of nuclear war hangs like a menacing cloud over Europe, Jehovah's Witnesses proclaim a liberty that only Jehovah can bring. (Isa. 61:1) This good news is being heard even by those difficult to reach, as the following experience shows.

Austria made a concentrated effort during the past service year to reach people who are deaf. A young deaf man in that country found a copy of *The Watchtower* in the waiting room of a railway station. He was curious, picked up the magazine,

and began to read. The word "Jehovah" puzzled him. 'The name of one of Jesus' apostles,' he thought, and continued reading. One article touched his heart, and since it had always been his desire to teach people about God, he made a visit to the branch office in Vienna. There he received the address where the deaf have their meetings. He attended the first meeting that same week even though it meant traveling 56 miles each way. His zeal has produced fruitage already. Another deaf couple are studying the Bible and are regularly at the meetings.

In *Sweden* the Lutheran State Church is struggling against the wind. Over 90 percent of the population belong to the church, but only a small minority attend church regularly. People resign their membership by the thousands every year. Clergymen in the southern part of Sweden are worried. They arranged two seminars to discuss the situation. Since Jehovah's Witnesses are known as one of the fastest-growing religious groups in Sweden, the organizer of the seminar called the branch office and asked if one of Jehovah's Witnesses could come and inform them about our beliefs, methods, and organization. A district overseer was sent. He gave a talk and answered their questions.

At the first seminar, held in February 1986, some 50 priests and other representatives of the church were present. They listened attentively, with a mild and polite attitude. After the session, 5 books, 25 brochures, and 30 magazines were placed.

The next seminar was held in February 1987.

Some 20 clergymen, a professor of sociology of religion, and an assistant professor of theology at the University of Lund attended. When introducing the district overseer as a speaker, the chairman, a vicar, said: "First, I want to tell you that I am sure that none of us priests here would agree to preach on the same conditions as our guest speaker does. I know that he does it full-time and without a salary. On the contrary, we priests complain over our salaries, requiring more and more all the time."

During the session, many questions were raised and the audience seemed to accept the explanations given. After the session, most of them lined up in front of the brother and asked for literature. About 25 brochures and 20 magazines were placed. A young clergyman told the brother that he admired our organization. "It's amazing to see how you stick together in such a united belief and brotherhood in more than 200 countries around the world," he said and sighed over the difficulties the church is having in Sweden.

Some 50 miles from Madrid, *Spain*, are situated two high-security prisons where dangerous criminals and terrorists are incarcerated. In one of these prisons, which is being renovated, a room is being prepared to be used exclusively as a "Kingdom Hall" and study room for those who wish to consider the Bible with Jehovah's Witnesses. In the other prison, as many as 50 inmates regularly meet together to listen to recordings of the meetings held by the local congregation.

The prisoners who attend these meetings look different from other prisoners. They are neatly

groomed and dressed, and they even wear ties, which none of the other prisoners do. A "No Smoking" sign is prominently displayed at the meeting location.

More importantly, these prisoners are applying what they are learning. One prisoner had been meticulously planning a bank robbery, which he was going to carry out after his release. He scrapped those plans because of the Bible truths that he had learned. Another has decided to marry the woman with whom he had been living for nine years. Yet another prisoner appeared at the meeting with a black eye. When asked what had happened, he cheerfully explained that a fellow inmate had punched him, but he was very happy because he had been able to hold himself in check and not return evil for evil.



'GLORIFY JEHOVAH IN THE ISLANDS OF THE SEA'

From the islands of the sea comes a voice that is truly glorifying the name of Jehovah. (Isa. 24:15) The island of *Réunion*, lying in the Indian Ocean

east of Africa in the *Mauritius* branch territory, is one example of that voice. While busy in the preaching work, a young brother met a musician who already had some of our Bible publications. The musician belonged to a rock music band of five persons, who grew and sold marijuana. Nevertheless, the brother invited the musician to the district convention of 1986. Three from the band came the first day of the convention, and all five attended the last day. A Bible study was started with all of them. Four band members belonged to the same family, and despite opposition from their family, they destroyed their marijuana plantation. Next, they donated the microphone they used for their rock music to the congregation. Within three months, all five changed their lives to the extent that they qualified as publishers.

East of Australia you will find *New Caledonia*. During the past service year, this branch office sent several brothers to the islands of Wallis and Futuna, where the Catholic Church dominates the people's lives and is strongly opposed to our work. Quite a few brothers from these islands live in New Caledonia. During a recent visit, the brothers met a college teacher from the Catholic Church. He told them that lately there had been some class discussions on other religions, and all the students wanted to speak about Jehovah's Witnesses' beliefs. After doing some research and listening to talks based on our publications, one student remarked: "It is surprising to see that those from our ethnic group who have become Witnesses seem to be more open-minded, more reasonable, and have

a remarkable knowledge of the Bible. It looks as if this movement has succeeded in changing people. We do not see the same impact on people in our church."

From the Pacific island branch office of *Hawaii*, we hear reports of young ones still in school who are also taking a stronger stand for Jehovah. "Because I was scared of getting a negative response from my classmates, I can remember when I used to give them the most simple reasons for my shunning worldly things," admits one Witness girl. "Well, not anymore! I've learned to take each individual pressure and use it as an opportunity for further witnessing. It has improved my relationship with Jehovah and my own self-esteem."

With such sincere efforts, she has placed much literature and conducted as many as seven different Bible studies. Her science teacher said to her: "I have talked to a few of Jehovah's Witnesses before when they came to my door, but it took until this year through the discussions we've shared, the literature I've read, and your ability to speak up for what you believe to be right to finally broaden my understanding of Jehovah's Witnesses' organization. I have great admiration for your efforts and accomplishments, and now I can also respect your religion. Thank you for not clamming up and for taking the time to explain your faith to me."

The young sister sums up her attitude toward witnessing at school this way: "One thing I've learned: Even though we are separated from the rest of the publishers and pioneers and from the field service meetings, we are never separated

from our territory. For 30 hours a week, we have a territory no one else is able to work."

COUNTRIES UNDER BAN 'SING OF GOD'S STRENGTH'

Jehovah's influence frustrates the evil plots of opposers, thus enabling his earthly servants to 'sing of God's strength.' (Ps. 59:16) Our brothers living in countries where the Kingdom work is banned cannot be silenced. Their evangelizing continues.

One day in November 1986, in an *African* provincial town, a small group of brothers who were gathered in a private home for the Service Meeting were arrested. Included in this group was the special pioneer who takes the lead in the congregation. He was badly beaten and kicked by one of the two policemen who had carried out the arrests. "He's the one who keeps the others preaching in spite of the ban! It's his fault that the others are in jail," he yelled.

During the beating, the brother cried out to Jehovah for help and strength. The jailer who was watching told the one doing the beating that he had better stop, adding, "You should beware of mistreating servants of God!" This had an effect because the following day the policeman came to the brother to beg pardon for what he had done.

"What I did was very bad," he said contritely. He further confessed that he knew that Jehovah was the true God. The special pioneer and the others were released a week later. Now when the police see our brothers engaging in the ministry, they leave them alone.

In another *African* country, a congregation with only 35 publishers had 19 new publishers baptized. "*The Watchtower* saved my life!" said one of them previous to his baptism. Here is what happened:

He had been an official of the ruling political party. The head of the local guerrillas and his gang went hunting for this man. On arriving at his home, the guerrillas found him reading a *Watchtower* magazine. They asked him if he was a member of the church that published that magazine. He replied that he was not yet a member but was studying with the Witnesses and hoped to become one. They told him that they knew he was an area official of the ruling party, but "because of the magazine" he was reading, they were not going to kill him. They left him alive.

Excitedly, this interested person dashed to the meeting place and explained to our brothers that he would have been dead if it had not been for the *Watchtower* magazine. He was now determined to become one of Jehovah's Witnesses.

In lands where persecution is prevalent, Jehovah can blind the enemy to protect his servants, as this experience from an *African* country shows. Notice of the circuit overseer's forthcoming visit arrived at a congregation at the same time a brother

was disfellowshipped. The disfellowshipped one became vindictive and told the police he knew the date of the circuit overseer's visit, and he could lead them to the home and identify this "big fish," an important man in our organization.

The authorities showed keen interest and anxiously awaited the occasion. Then, unexpectedly, the circuit overseer advanced the date of his visit to this congregation by several weeks. When the disfellowshipped man led the police to the home where he surmised the circuit overseer would be visiting, there was great disappointment. Upon learning that the police expected to arrest the circuit overseer, the brothers told the police that this informer was no longer one of Jehovah's Witnesses. When asked why, the brothers answered that he was not living a Christian life and had therefore been disfellowshipped. Angered by falsely raised hopes and embarrassed, the police said: "Well, if he's not good enough for you, he's not good enough for us either," and hauled the disfellowshipped man off to jail.

From an *Asian* country under ban, one of the pioneers met a young man at the door who showed keen interest in the Bible discussion. Since she did not have any literature with her, she promised to call back and give him something to read. The following week she returned. After a one-and-a-half-hour discussion, he took the book *You Can Live Forever in Paradise on Earth*. He said: "You know, I have been praying to God for three weeks to send someone to help me understand the Bible. I believe you are an answer to my prayer." The

sister and her husband now conduct a Bible study with this interested person.

In one *Middle Eastern* country, a brother was persecuted by his family; they considered him an apostate. When he told his mother that he was going to get married by a minister of Jehovah's Witnesses, she adamantly refused his invitation to attend the wedding celebration. She considered her son's marriage a form of adultery because it would be contracted outside of her church. At last, he convinced her to attend his wedding. She went reluctantly, but as she listened to the talk given by an elder, she started to weep. Her other son, also in attendance, was surprised. He asked his mother why she was sad. She said she had attended many marriage celebrations, but this was the first time in all her life that she understood just what marriage is, its reason and its meaning. She wept because she was happy. Now the mother and the other members of the family are in the truth.

Interestingly, in the March 15, 1987, edition of *The Sunday Gleaner* from Kingston, Jamaica, an editor, after reading the 1987 Yearbook of Jehovah's Witnesses and commenting favorably about our rapid growth, concluded his editorial with this statement: "If the insistent urging to preach more is heeded in this service year, the 1988 Yearbook should be even more impressive." Yes, after considering the report of our past service year, we can conclude that it is indeed "even more impressive." Thus, thanks to Jehovah, from one end of the earth to the other the evangelizing work of Jehovah's Witnesses continues.—Ps. 75:1.

ACTS OF JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES IN MODERN TIMES

The apostle Peter was amazed. From infancy he had been taught to avoid uncircumcised Gentiles. Now, God was telling him to visit them and even become their friend. So Peter obediently left the seaport of Joppa and traveled north to the port of Caesarea. There he entered into the house of a Gentile—Cornelius. The rest of the story is familiar to all of Jehovah's Witnesses. Cornelius and his household became the first of a long line of non-Jewish converts to Christianity.—Acts 10:1-48.

Like Peter, Jehovah's Witnesses today have been willing to spread "the good news" everywhere and to everyone, as the following shows.—Acts 10:36.

IRELAND: Almost a hundred years ago, the first president of the Watch Tower Society traveled from the United States to expand the preaching of the good news. His first port of call was Ireland. The year was 1891. He reported: 'Ireland is a field ready to be harvested.' But how would God's people fare in planting and cultivating the Kingdom seed in the face of divisions, mob actions, and terrorism?

KOREA: The year 1914 marked the start of printing the true Christian message in the Korean language. But not everyone there appreciated that message. For example, in 1950 one Korean brother was seized and questioned. He thought he would be killed but was determined to give a witness before that happened. Read about him and others who live in a country where one out of every four publishers is a pioneer.

COSTA RICA: Christopher Columbus searched for but did not find a passageway to the Indian Ocean. Instead, he found land and named it Costa Rica, which means "Rich Coast." The country's real riches are the people who have become worshipers of Jehovah. In 1918 Costa Rica had the fourth-largest number of Jehovah's Witnesses in the world. Today, it is experiencing one new peak in Kingdom proclaimers after another.

May these accounts be a strengthening aid to your faith and zealous work in Kingdom evangelizing.

IRELAND



"DURING the Dark Ages," Ireland "was 'the island of saints and scholars' which kept the light of Christian learning bright when it was being extinguished elsewhere," penned Donald S. Connerly in his book *The Irish*. However, the beams of true Christian learning shone brightly in Ireland only after years of faithful and vigorous activity on the part of Jehovah's servants. The story of their struggle against incessant opposition and persistent antagonism stands as a testimony to their stout faith and determination, as well as their deep love for Jehovah and the people they tried to help. Who are these servants of Jehovah and what is their story?

Just over 5,000,000 people live in Ireland. These are sharply separated by political ideologies and religious hatreds that can be, and in recent years have been, easily fanned into open conflict and brutal violence. Yet, you will also find the Irish not only warmhearted and cheerful but hospitable and unhurried.

Their history from the time of the Celtic invaders of the fourth century B.C.E. down through the Viking and Norman raiders to the kings of England is a tragic tale of bitterness, bloodshed, and oppression. For over 750 years Ireland was ruled from England. In 1922, following a struggle for independence, the island was partitioned. The northeastern part, populated mainly with Protestants, stayed in the United Kingdom. The remaining four fifths of the island, almost totally Catholic, became the independent Republic of Ireland.

EMERALD JEWEL

Despite the dark side of Ireland's history, the land glows with green-colored beauty. It is an emerald jewel of an island with misty, verdant countrysides framed by rocky coastlines. Travel its 170 miles from east to west and you will delight in seeing the country's fertile central plain, ringed by gently rolling hills and imposing mountains. Journey from north to south (about 300 miles) and you will be entranced by its scenic lakes and rivers, by its magnificent coastal panoramas, and by the variety of color, a profusion of greenery and flowers. Once seen, Ireland's beauty is difficult to forget.

Although the country is fundamentally agricultural, in recent years some industries have sprung up. The few large centers of population, like Dublin, capital of the Republic, and Belfast, capital city of Northern Ireland, contrast starkly with the quiet, peaceful towns and villages of rural areas. It was in this setting that the spark of truth was ignited in the late 19th century.

C. T. RUSSELL SPARKS TRUTH

In 1891 Charles T. Russell, the first president of the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society, visited Ireland. It was his first port of call when traveling from the United States to expand the preaching of Christian truth in Europe. Russell, himself of Scots-Irish descent, disembarked at Queenstown (now Cobh) in the south of Ireland.

As a result of his work, ecclesias, or congregations, were started in Dublin and Belfast, and from these the message of truth began to trickle forth.

During this early period, the brothers distributed tracts at the doors of Protestant churches and engaged in informal rather than organized witnessing. *The Watchtower*, in 1904, reported: "In Ireland, too, the Truth spreads: the dear brethren in Dublin continue to scatter the message of love, with much joy to themselves."

In 1908 about 300 attended Russell's lecture in Belfast on the subject "The Overthrow of Satan's Empire." By then Belfast had an ecclesia of about 24 Bible Students. In Dublin, after meeting with approximately 40 brothers and other interested persons, he talked to a public audience of more than a thousand people.

Three years later on another visit, Russell met with about 40 Bible Students in Belfast. That evening about a thousand people came to the Ulster Hall to hear his address "Which Is the True Gospel?" In his talk Russell vigorously defended the Bible against higher criticism and firmly stressed the need to return to the Bible instead of clinging to the creeds and doctrines of men.

LACK OF UNITY OF THOUGHT

Despite these hopeful beginnings, though, the preaching work did not progress smoothly. In those days when the Bible Students in Ireland were just beginning to understand the truths of the Bible, there was not the same unity of thought that has since developed among Jehovah's people earth wide. Why? Because many who associated failed to see the need to be "harmoniously joined together" to accomplish God's will.—Eph. 4: 1-6, 16.

By 1914 there were about 70 Bible Students. At the meetings many would promote their own interpretation of the Scriptures when the congregations discussed, for example, the *Millennial Dawn* series of books. They became egotistical and felt that their understanding of the Bible was superior. And when it became obvious that 1914 was not going to bring the complete end of this system of things, a number of these Bible Students rejected the channel of truth that Jehovah was using.

PROUD SPIRIT IN DUBLIN

As World War I dragged on, the proud spirit of independently minded persons sowed the seeds of further problems. They thought that the Bible teachings promoted by Brother Russell did not amount to much after all. Thus, they failed to realize that Jehovah had an important work for his people to do.

By 1919 the elective elders in the Dublin congregation were actively resisting the counsel and direction coming from Jehovah's organization. They resented anything that interfered with their control of the congregation. Their personal views and ideas became paramount. (Rom. 12:3) Although these elders read to the congregation the letters sent from the Society, they ignored any counsel or direction these offered. A few faithful ones in the congregation kept doing what they could in the way of distributing tracts as well as books like *The Divine Plan of the Ages*, but the majority had no desire to get involved in such work.

Charles Wilson, one of the brothers in that early congregation in Dublin, recalled how things came

IRELAND

SCOTLAND

ATLANTIC
OCEAN

to a head one evening in 1920. By then most of those in the congregation had lost appreciation for Jehovah's organization. He tells us what happened:

"We went to the meeting that night and were told by one of the elders that the congregation was going to vote us out of their company. When they told us that they were breaking with the International Bible Students and setting up their own organization, I said, 'Well, you have no need to vote us out of your company. We're leaving!' I turned and walked out the door. Brother and Sister Brown and Sister Rutland followed me out."

One dividing issue focused on the preaching work with *The Golden Age* and other publications. Another was whether to accept a more theocratic method of organization as was then being discussed in *The Watchtower*. It was a very difficult period. A real purging resulted. Out of about a hundred members of the congregation, only four stuck with Jehovah's organization. Those who broke away eventually fragmented into smaller, discordant factions, with their own individual leaders.

The preaching work in Dublin almost came to a stop. As time went on, however, others took up the challenge of declaring the good news not just in Dublin but all over Ireland as colporteurs, or full-time preachers.

Sometimes colporteurs were driven out of their accommodations as a result of clergy-inspired opposition. They were always made welcome, though, by Sister Rutland, a former policewoman

and one of the few loyal ones left in Dublin. Many brothers and sisters affectionately remember her as "Ma" Rutland and are grateful that she made her home a haven for those who needed it when things got tough. You could always find a "bite and the kettle sitting on the hob" at "Ma" Rutland's.

IN NORTHERN IRELAND

Before we continue with the story of the Republic of Ireland, however, let us get up to date with developments in Northern Ireland. This northeastern corner of the island, with its rolling farmlands and low mountains, had been colonized in the 17th century by Protestants from Britain. About two thirds of the people of Northern Ireland are descended from English and Scottish Protestants. A particularly militant form of Protestantism has since developed, characterized by a virulent hatred of Catholicism. In this part of the island too, people were in spiritual darkness and in ignorance of God's purpose, blinded by the doctrines of Babylon the Great just as much as people in the south. They also needed help to break free. —Rev. 17:1, 2; 18:2-4.

OPENING EYES WITH THE PHOTO-DRAMA

Beginning in 1914 the *Photo-Drama of Creation* was used to help open people's eyes. This presentation, which included color slides, moving pictures, and synchronized phonograph records, showed the outworking of God's purpose from creation down to the end of the Thousand Year Reign of Jesus Christ. Sister Maggie Cooper assisted in showing the *Photo-Drama* all over Northern Ireland.

"The hall was packed every night, with very little opposition and a great deal of appreciation," she said. "It broke down much of the prejudice against us." She remembered how it was no easy task to transport all the paraphernalia for the eight-hour showings of the *Photo-Drama*. "Looking back," she said, "I cannot understand how we did it. There were so many obstacles and a ton of luggage to carry about." With trust and confidence in Jehovah, however, they were able to overcome all the obstacles.

THE TRUTH ABOUT HELL

Tracts exposing false doctrines such as hellfire torment penetrated the religious gloom that existed in Northern Ireland. During World War I, for example, an advertisement in a Belfast newspaper caught the eye of Bob Oliver. It read: "What Say the Scriptures About Hell? For a free tract on the subject write to the International Bible Students Association, 34 Craven Terrace, London, W.2." Mr. Oliver, then a member of the Presbyterian Church, had profound doubts about the doctrine of hellfire. So he responded to the advertisement and recognized the truth in what he read. Sending away for that tract was the first step in a course of life in Jehovah's service that continues to this day.

As a young girl, Susan Milne had attended many emotional tent-meetings held by the numerous born-again sects in Northern Ireland, where preachers harped on eternal damnation in the fires of hell. Susan concluded that she was not worth saving, since she never felt the experience of salvation claimed by many who attended such meet-

ings. In 1922, however, she read a tract entitled *Where Are the Dead?* After that her whole outlook changed.

Prior to this her father had surprised her when he said: "I am beginning to think that there is no such thing as hellfire." To her this was blasphemy. But now she knew what Jesus meant when he said, "the truth will set you free"—especially from false religious teachings. (John 8:32) So after reading the tract, she visited her father, and to their mutual delight, they found that they had both been reading literature from the same source—the International Bible Students Association. She and her husband, her father, and others of her family all came into the truth.

"ADVERTISE . . . THE KING AND HIS KINGDOM"

Sister Milne quickly saw the need for action. She often repeated the slogan from the Cedar Point convention of 1922, "Advertise, advertise, advertise the King and his Kingdom." And in response she and her family canvassed extensively with *The Harp of God* and shared enthusiastically in conducting study courses with that illuminating publication.

Brothers and sisters, including Bob Oliver and Susan Milne, began Sunday witnessing in Northern Ireland with *The Harp of God*. The people they witnessed to had a deep-rooted Presbyterian tradition that included a strong abhorrence for anything that could be considered sabbath-breaking. So an angry reaction was the order of the day.

The Witnesses demonstrated this same courage

when distributing issues of *The Golden Age* that contained outspoken messages indicting the clergy for their part in suppressing the truth and persecuting true Christians. Brother Oliver recalls vividly one illustration in a special issue of *The Golden Age*—a clergyman wielding a dagger with blood dripping from its point. The caption was the message from Jeremiah 2:34 (*King James Version*): "In thy skirts is found the blood of the souls of the poor innocents."

The brothers also arranged to give public lectures advertising the Kingdom wherever they could. This was how Bob Dempster came in contact with the truth in his hometown of Comber, near Belfast. As the publicity work intensified, however, the opposition also mounted. When Brother Dempster himself started to advertise the Kingdom, the clergy used underhanded methods to try to stop him. At a time when there was a great deal of unemployment, for example, they influenced the public official who handled matters to refuse to pay unemployment assistance to Brother Dempster. But Brother Dempster refused to be intimidated. He began associating with the small congregation that met in the Milnes' home, to the mutual benefit of all.

Slowly but surely as the Kingdom light spread, the congregations began to grow. Not all the enemies of the truth, however, were on the outside.

A SIFTING IN BELFAST

Just as the brothers in Dublin had felt the bad effects of independently minded elective elders back in 1920, so did those in Northern Ireland,

especially in Belfast. Hence a time of sifting began. Loyalty to Jehovah's organization and enthusiasm for the public preaching work once again became the focal point that separated people. One Bible Student who had met with Brother Russell during his visit to Belfast in 1908 came to prefer his own ideas and opinions. Eventually he set up his own group, which he called Steadfast Bible Students.

Later, after *The Finished Mystery* with its powerful condemnation of false religion was released in 1917, others grew afraid and broke off association. One prominent member of the Belfast Congregation put a notice in his shop window that read: "I have no connection with the International Bible Students Association nor with the book *The Finished Mystery*." He also set up a group of his own and claimed to abide by the teachings of Brother Russell. That kind of rejection of Jehovah's channel by prominent ones in the congregation tested the rest of the brothers' faith and loyalty.

An even greater test came from some individuals who stayed within the congregation. As the preaching work gained momentum, a definite division of opinion became more and more apparent between those who appreciated fully the need to advertise the King and the Kingdom, and the elective elders with contrary views.

Like the scribes and Pharisees of Jesus' day who 'liked the most prominent place,' these were more interested in position and privilege than in getting on with the preaching work. (Matt. 23:2-7) Their

proud and superior attitude created unrest and unhappiness in the congregation. An atmosphere of suspicion and distrust eventually arose as each elder would try to elevate himself and strengthen his position in the congregation.

When the time for election of the elders came around, votes were solicited. Some elders arranged special tea parties and invited brothers and sisters for the sole purpose of gaining support and influencing votes. Because these elders failed to recognize Christ as the head of the congregation, dissensions, cliques, and divisions arose. This is well illustrated by what happened in ancient Corinth. Giving undue attention to men, members of the Corinthian congregation split up into factions, saying: "I [belong] to Apollos," "But I to Cephas," "But I to Christ."—1 Cor. 1:11, 12.

Some brothers, like Diotrefes of John's day, showed little respect for any direction coming through Jehovah's organization, and they would deliberately try to inject doubts regarding the Society into the minds and hearts of humble, submissive ones. In this way they mimicked Diotrefes' spirit by 'chattering about the brothers from the branch with wicked words.'—3 John 9, 10.

Finally Jehovah acted. The August 15 and September 1, 1932, issues of *The Watchtower* explained why a group of mature brothers called a service committee should take oversight in the congregation, not "elective elders." This new organizational point sifted out of the congregation the last of the rebellious ones, leaving only 12 regular publishers in Belfast who stuck to the truth.

RUTHERFORD'S LECTURES ADD IMPETUS

During the 1930's this small group of brothers in Northern Ireland kept up with developments among Jehovah's earth-wide people. Enthusiastically they began using the recorded lectures of J. F. Rutherford, then president of the Watch Tower Society. Exciting experiences from playing the transcription machine soon followed.

Alex Mitchell was a sailor. While at sea as an engineer in 1927, he read the books *The Divine Plan of the Ages*, *The Time Is at Hand*, and *The Harp of God* and saw the light of truth. When he returned home to Belfast, he immediately began searching for further help to understand the Bible. Some members of the Steadfast Bible Students tried to discourage him from reading the Society's publications. But he had already recognized the ring of truth in these publications, and eventually he found the true Bible Students.

Soon he started in the preaching work. He remembered well how he and Brother Oliver used to carry the transcription machine all over the city of Belfast. They began this work without a vehicle. So imagine spotting two men tramping from street to street and in country areas with all their equipment tugging on leather straps that were slung over their shoulders!

One of Brother Mitchell's responsibilities was to locate suitable halls where they could broadcast the recorded lectures. Halls could be obtained—but usually for one booking only. Why? Because most of the locations were under the watchful eyes of the local clergy, who loathed the message being

sounded. When they could not hire halls, the brothers played their transcription machine in the streets of Belfast and in the surrounding countryside.

They usually chose Protestant streets in which to broadcast the lectures because at that time Protestant people were generally more receptive. Once, Brother Mitchell and Brother Milne drove into a quiet side street without checking on the area first. They set up their equipment as usual, played a little music to attract attention, and then invited the local people to listen to the Bible lecture. Unwittingly, though, they had driven into a solidly Catholic area, where they were mistakenly classed as Protestants. The local people started pelting them with stones. Quickly they piled all their equipment back into their car and headed out. As the brothers left, the mob battered the car body with iron bars and shattered the windscreen. Apart from this shock, however, they escaped without any serious injury, and the event in no way deflated their enthusiasm for the work.

One afternoon Brother Mitchell was bombarded with potatoes. Fortunately they were cooked and therefore soft. As he drove off, Brother Mitchell spoke through the loudspeaker to the crowd and said how glad he was that he had not come in the morning, as the potatoes would have been harder!

The brothers also made good use of the portable phonograph. Despite some mishaps, such as forgetting to put the record in place before leaving home for the ministry, they grew very adept at using this instrument. With a bicycle, a phonograph, a set of

records, and a box of books, they were equipped for a good day's witnessing.

STRENGTHENED BY RADIO-TELEPHONE LINKS

Hearing Brother Rutherford's lectures broadcast live from places like London and New York strengthened the brothers. In 1938 the powerful lecture "Face the Facts" drew an attendance of over 2,500 to the King's Hall in Belfast.

In connection with publicizing this talk, some of the brothers still have vivid memories of the information marches made through Belfast. Because of the tense religious atmosphere in Northern Ireland at the time, many felt apprehensive at the prospect of information-marching. But they held 25 parades in the city's main streets without any violent reactions.

Some friends wore placards advertising the public lecture. Others held up signs bearing slogans like "Religion Is a Snare and a Racket" and "Serve God and Christ the King." One young newspaper reporter, when he saw the slogan "Religion Is a Snare and a Racket," asked: "Are you finding that out only now?"

The lecture "Government and Peace" was a live tie-in with New York City's Madison Square Garden. During this talk policemen guarded the hall in Belfast where the brothers were gathered. The IRA (Irish Republican Army) had threatened to bomb the hall if the lecture was not canceled. The brothers were not discouraged. The efforts of the IRA to intimidate the brothers in Belfast had no

more success than the efforts of Catholic Action to disrupt the lecture in New York.

These live broadcasts cultivated a feeling of unity among the brothers. Despite the religious and patriotic fervor that was intensifying as war loomed in Europe, this small band of brothers in Ireland was thus able to see that it was part of a growing worldwide organization. Before we continue with events in Northern Ireland, however, let us go back and pick up the story in the Republic of Ireland.

UNREMITTING OPPOSITION IN THE SOUTH

During the period from 1920 to World War II, only a few faithful brothers and sisters struggled on in Dublin itself, while in the rest of the Catholic south only scattered colporteur work was being done.

Some comments from the *Yearbooks of Jehovah's Witnesses* give an idea of the conditions they had to put up with.

1935: "Brethren have been put to loss, and some bodily hurt, and the literature which would help the people has been destroyed."

1937: "Ireland is the darkest part of the British Isles. . . . Priests . . . follow the pioneers from place to place, find where literature has been left . . . and immediately cause its destruction."

1938: "Much opposition to the publishers of the Kingdom message. Mobs have assaulted Jehovah's witnesses at the instance of a Roman Catholic priest . . . Opposition has not yet reached its peak."

Earlier, during 1926, Brother Pryce Hughes,

who later served as vice president of the International Bible Students Association in London, and his three companions came to Waterford in southern Ireland. They were welcomed by three brothers who had gone there earlier. Prior to Brother Hughes' arrival, the brothers in Waterford had endured a Catholic mob attack by hooligans who burned what they considered to be 'evil literature.'

After placing literature with interested persons, the brothers would quickly move on. They found housing with Protestant people and tried to cover as large an area as possible before the local priest became aware of what was happening. In one town, the local press printed warnings about their activity, and children would spit at them as they passed along the street. So to avoid being identified too quickly, they worked from the outer limits of their chosen portion of territory and finished in the town where they had their accommodation.

On another occasion, in the little market town of Graigenamanagh, they met with vicious opposition. On returning to their lodgings, they were confronted by a crowd of jeering youths, who pelted them with stones. "This was a 'holy day,' 'Saint' Patrick's Day," said Brother Hughes, "and the donkey carts had been rolling into town all day for the special Masses. At Mass, the local priest had incited everyone against us." Realizing they had to vacate quickly, he and his companions moved all their belongings by bicycle to the nearest railway station.

The colporteurs learned how to adapt to this ever-present threat of violence. Once a man with a

pitchfork chased Brother Hughes across a field. Another time a farmer suddenly fired a shotgun at Brother Hughes' feet!

Another colporteur, Jack Corr, arrived in Dublin in 1930. His parents were Catholic, so he was well equipped to talk to the Catholic people he met. He found that although the Constitution of Ireland guaranteed freedom of religion, many people believed this should not include the preaching work of Jehovah's Witnesses.

Brother Corr often felt the fury of the angered clergy and their supporters. One mob, instigated by the parish priest, pulled him out of bed at midnight and then burned all his literature in the public square. At another time a mob of about 200 were banging on the door of his lodgings. "The terrified landlady tried to push me under the bed, while she shouted terrible curses through the window at the crowd," he reported. "I managed to calm her fears, and a quarter of an hour later the mob vanished like smoke, enabling me to carry on as though nothing had happened."

MORE VIOLENCE FROM RELIGIOUS OPPOSERS

In 1931 Victor Gurd and his partner Jim Corby arrived in the city of Cork, near where Brother Russell had landed in Ireland 40 years earlier. Another group of brothers joined them for a while. They worked their way through the countryside, distributing copies of *Studies in the Scriptures* and *The Harp of God*.

While the brothers were witnessing at Roscrea in County Tipperary, gunmen held them up, took all

their literature, and warned them to get out of the district. When the brothers arrived at their accommodation, they found more trouble. Opposers had taken their supply of literature, soaked it with petrol, and set it alight. Round the bonfire stood the local police, the clergy, and children from the area, singing "Faith of Our Fathers"!

Around this time John Retter and companions came to Limerick. Because he had been born in Austria, he witnessed to many Germans who had immigrated to Ireland's west coast. There was also John Cooke (serving now at Bethel in South Africa), who in 1936 was thrown into a Dublin prison because he insisted on doing Jehovah's work.

JEHOVAH'S PROTECTION IN THE NORTH

During this pre-World War II period, other colporteurs spearheaded the work in Northern Ireland. Sarah Hall arrived in County Tyrone in 1926. She had come to a knowledge of the truth in England in 1915 after reading *The Divine Plan of the Ages*. What she read motivated her to enter the colporteur work.

The majority of folks she spoke to did not share her appreciation for Bible truth. Her small, slight frame and mild disposition did not dissuade one woman from chasing her with a pitchfork or a man who was incensed at her message from calling her a "Delilah" and trying to grab her by the throat.

Undismayed, she showed great determination and perseverance. "On the whole, it hasn't been bad," she said, thinking back to preaching under testing conditions. "We got used to them shouting

at us. If you pray for the Lord's protection, he gives it to you." The colporteurs were confident that Jehovah would be 'with them to deliver them.' And he was!—Jer. 1:7, 8; Ps. 23:4, 5.

JEHOVAH PROVIDES

Billy Holland came into the truth in 1926 after reading *The Divine Plan of the Ages*. Like so many colporteurs, he relied greatly on Jehovah's promise that his servants would never be "left entirely."—Ps. 37:25; Matt. 6:28-34.

Brother Holland explained: "Sometimes I went without breakfast; sometimes I had a few slices of bread without butter. I remember one time when I was out in the countryside in County Down. After spending some time in the ministry, I went down a little lane and put my bicycle alongside the hedge. I sat down and was eating my dry bread and listening to the birds singing. Then I looked more closely at the hedge and saw some lovely blackberries. I picked some and put them between my slices of bread. It was just like blackberry jam—I really enjoyed it!"

He had the same spirit when funds ran low. "My shoes were wearing out and my feet would get wet," he recalls. "Then one sunny day as I was walking along a country road, it got very warm, and the tar on the road began to melt. The tar filled the holes in the soles of my shoes. So I got my shoes 'mended.'" And that was without cost!

SPIRITUAL FOOD SUPPLIES DURING WAR

During World War II, from 1939 to 1945, the Republic of Ireland remained neutral, but North-

ern Ireland, as part of the United Kingdom, braved bombing raids and other war hardships.

One problem that arose during these years was the need to maintain a spiritual food supply. During the war the British government imposed a censorship ban that prohibited the import and export of *The Watchtower* and other publications of the Society. This tactic by Satan to cut the lines of communication and supply to the brothers did not succeed. It was defeated. How? Simply by the Society's arranging for brothers in places like the United States and Canada to send copies of *The Watchtower* under plain cover to brothers in Belfast.

When these copies were received, responsible brothers quickly got to work and duplicated the main articles. They then distributed them to the congregations. Once these copies of the magazines started coming, the brothers never missed out on any of their vital spiritual nourishment.

Bob Oliver remembers getting *The Watchtower* from a Brother Kelly in the United States. Brother Kelly would also include information about what "Uncle Nathan" (Nathan H. Knorr, third president of the Watch Tower Society) had been talking about, thus giving information about assemblies and so forth. At times the brothers found *The Watchtower* or a book such as "*The Truth Shall Make You Free*" in the middle of a food parcel sent to them. When an unconcealed copy of *The Watchtower* arrived untouched, the brothers in Belfast joked that it must have slipped through during the censor's tea break.

TREATED WITH CONTEMPT

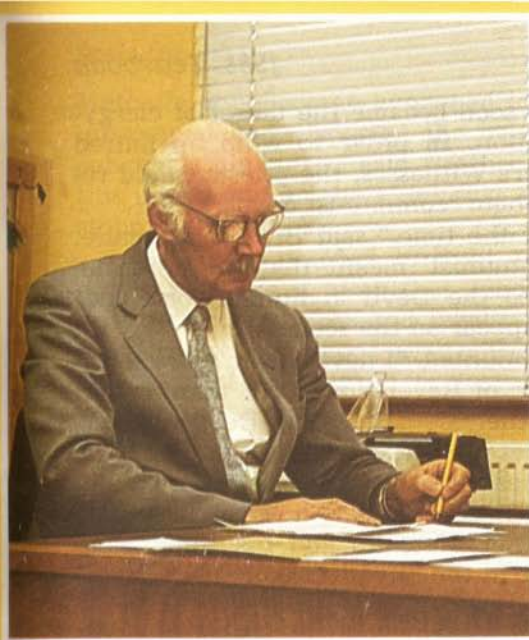
During the war the brothers in Northern Ireland had to endure intense, sustained hostility from the clergy and their supporters who were fully behind the war effort. How right Jesus was when he said: "Now because you are no part of the world, . . . on this account the world hates you!"—John 15: 18, 19.

Typical of the people's contempt is the following letter, which was sent to the Belfast Congregation in August 1943:

"Dear Sir:

"Having been made the unwilling recipient of one of the leaflets which you have the effrontery to inflict upon a too-tolerant public, I should like to take this opportunity of stating that I absolutely forbid any of your followers to enter upon my grounds upon any pretext whatsoever. Kindly advise your misguided collection of snivelling Bible-thumpers accordingly, as, if this warning is ignored, the trespasser will be forcibly—very forcibly—ejected. I shall refrain from setting the dog on him, as I have no wish to force such an unpalatable mouthful upon the unfortunate animal, but if he decides to take the initiative himself, I shall certainly put no obstacle in his way."

In spite of the hard times, every effort was made to expand the preaching activity. Did Jehovah continue to bless the work of all the faithful brothers? Yes! When the war ended in 1945, there were about 120 publishers in Belfast and about 20 in Dublin.



*Fred Metcalfe,
one of the
first special
pioneers
assigned to
the Republic
of Ireland*

PIONEERING IN THE REPUBLIC

The *Yearbook* for 1946 showed that there was to be no letup in spreading the good news in the Republic of Ireland at the end of World War II. "It is difficult," the *Yearbook* said, "for many to appreciate the dark spot that Southern Ireland is as respects the light and knowledge of God's Word." Then it went on: "Here again is an opening for real pioneers. We are now making arrangements for some to be sent there."

Fred Metcalfe, who is now a member of the Branch Committee for Ireland, was among the first of the special pioneers sent. His assignment was the city of Cork in the south of the country. He and his

fellow pioneers soon became the target of clergy-inspired opposition. In order to whip up hatred against Jehovah's Witnesses, the priests would repeatedly label them "communist devils."

"To people of the time," said Brother Metcalfe, "the term 'communist' meant that we were the nearest thing to the Devil in human form that could possibly appear on the scene!"

Antagonism mounted. "I never had a more sensitive appreciation of Revelation 12:17 than at that time," said Brother Metcalfe. "The Devil was certainly wrathful at the witness work beginning to be done in that area." Lies by the priests and widespread enmity finally came to a head in a mob attack on Brother Metcalfe and his companion, Brother Chaffin, in the city of Cork in 1948.

MOB VIOLENCE IN CORK

Once when Brother Chaffin was in field service, a crowd of women belligerently surrounded him, accused him of being a communist, and began violently attacking him. As there was no possibility of reasoning with this enraged mob, Brother Chaffin tried to escape by getting on a nearby bus. However, the bus crew joined in assaulting him. Some attackers threw stones, while other thugs cried "Dirty communist!" and "Throw him into the river!" Eventually, however, he evaded his pursuers by dodging into the high-walled enclosure of the priest's residence.

Meanwhile, Brother Metcalfe scrambled to escape on his bicycle but was overtaken by the same mob. They punched and kicked him and scattered his literature on the street. Happily for Brother

Metcalfe, a policeman happened to be passing. He intervened and dispersed the mob. "I felt it was Jehovah's guidance," said Brother Metcalfe, "that this man came on the scene just at that time and stopped the attack."

The Society decided to fight this case in the courts to make it clear that Jehovah's Witnesses were not communists and legally to establish our right to preach the good news without interference. Despite postponement after postponement to prevent the case from coming to court, the trial did eventually take place in July 1948.

The policeman who stopped the attack, although a Catholic, was willing to stand up in court and honestly give evidence about what he had seen. Several of the attackers were found guilty of assault. The publicity that resulted from the case did much to dispel the idea that Jehovah's Witnesses were communists and also to establish our right to declare the good news. It did not mean, however, the end to violent opposition to the truth.

ANGRY RESISTANCE CONTINUES

In the town of Athlone in the midlands of Ireland, for example, one woman vented her anger at the brothers by throwing a kettleful of boiling water at them. The citizens of that town even sent a petition to the Society to the effect that they did not want Jehovah's Witnesses to return—ever!

When four special pioneers were sent to the town of Drogheda, they were threatened with guns and attacked by violent mobs. A mass meeting was held in the town, and a resolution was adopted that asked the government to ban Jehovah's Witnesses

from the country. Notices appeared all over the town with the message: "Catholic Action! Citizens of Drogheda! A public meeting will be held . . . to consider means of combating the activities of a certain sect operating in the district. The mayor and representatives of local organisations will be present."

In the face of all such resistance, did the brothers ever flinch? Never! They withstood all the pressures exerted on them and began to see results from their labors.

RESPONSIVE EARS IN DUBLIN

Dudley Levis was among the first to respond to the message of truth in the postwar years in Dublin. He was a Church of Ireland member. Protestants, already living under an almost totally Catholic environment, viewed his leaving this church as traitorous. Thus, he faced ridicule and reproach from former associates who hated his newfound faith. "I was greatly encouraged," he said, "by older brothers, like Edwin Ridgewell, who had shown such sterling faith in very troubled times before me. Their example strengthened me."

The Witnesses concentrated their preaching on Protestant areas where the reaction tended to be less fiery than the Catholic strongholds. Gradually, though, they began to make inroads in Catholic areas. It was difficult. But their attitude was the same as that of the psalmist: "In God I have put my trust. I shall not be afraid. What can earthly man do to me?"—Ps. 56:11; Josh. 1:9.

CATHOLIC FAMILY RESPONDS

In time Catholic people began to respond to the truth. In 1949, for example, a sister contacted John Casey. This Catholic man showed great interest in what the sister said, but his wife, Bridie, refused to give him the money he needed to get the book being offered, *"The Truth Shall Make You Free."* He asked the sister to come back the next week. She did, and John gratefully accepted the book. "I have found the truth," he said. "I am not going near the Catholic Church anymore."

Bridie, however, was not interested. She asked a question that the brothers met repeatedly in their witness work. "Who is Jehovah? Is that someone in America at the head of your organization?" But eventually she too accepted the truth when she learned that the Bible really did not teach hellfire, the Trinity, and other such God-dishonoring doctrines.

John and Bridie Casey, like others who began seeing the light of the truth, experienced family and community pressure designed to discourage them from continuing their study of the Bible. "Every week my mother arranged for a visit from the Legion of Mary (a Catholic Action group) or the priest," explained Sister Casey. "But the priest was not able to use the Bible to disprove what we now knew was the truth. In the end he just stormed out of the house, condemning us to hell for twisting the Scriptures!"

MISSIONARIES ADD IMPETUS

At the close of World War II, pioneers were sent from England to small towns in Northern Ireland.

In 1946, at the convention in Edinburgh, Scotland, some of these pioneers approached the Society's president to ask if they could attend Gilead. "Yes," he answered, "if you promise to return to Ireland." Five sisters kept that promise.

The arrival of missionaries from the Watchtower Bible School of Gilead in 1949 speeded up the work. Maurice and Mary Jones, who had done much of the spadework, welcomed these workers. Two missionary homes were established, one in Dublin with Brother Jones' help, the other in Cork. The 1950 *Yearbook* commented that it took much hard work to free someone from the spiritual darkness that enveloped so many, especially since they had never seen a Bible. "The people," it said, "are fearful to let go of the traditions so long cherished, and so the progress is such that it needs much tact and patience."

The newly arrived missionaries covered huge areas on foot and on their bicycles, often while being subjected to verbal and physical attacks. And they toiled late into the night to cultivate gently whatever interest was found.—Compare Hosea 11:4.

One of the early missionaries, Elsie Levis (formerly Lott), recalled how she was mentally prepared for conditions in Ireland. "Before we left Gilead," she said, "Brother Franz told us that next to India he considered Ireland to be the most difficult assignment in the world. Because of the attitude of the Catholic Church, he felt that it was the toughest Catholic area in the world." She did find it to be difficult. "But," she continued, "we felt, also,

Seven of the original missionary sisters who came to Ireland in 1949 are, left to right: Mildred Willett (now Barr); Bessie Jones; Joan Retter (now Miller); Joey Orrom; Elsie Lott (now Levis); Ann Parkin (now Carter); Barbara Haywood (now Steffens)



that the people had been battered by political and religious forces, so we were just concerned for the people because the people themselves, underneath all the hostility, were very nice."

MISSIONARIES BREAK CATHOLIC BARRIER

Catholic mob action was a constant threat that hovered over the missionaries like a storm cloud ready to burst at any moment. So as not to arouse the suspicions and then the wrath of the neighbors, the missionaries would work separately while in

door-to-door service but in sight of each other. Prior to leaving the missionary home for service, each one would rehearse hand signals or shoulder shrugs with her field partner for that day. These signals would become a silent warning of an approaching mob.

Mildred Barr (formerly Willet, now at Brooklyn Bethel with her husband, John) remembers starting out in field service one day on her gray motorcycle. Her dark-brown split-hide panniers, or saddlebags—packed with her field literature, lunch, tea flask, and galoshes—were draped over the bike's rear fender. She and Frieda Miller rode into a Catholic area of Dublin. Once in the territory, they separated and parked their bikes in different locations, making sure the bikes would be out of the sight of householders but close enough for them to reach in a run if they needed to make a fast getaway.

Mildred chained and padlocked her bike to a railing and began door-to-door witnessing. She recalls: "I was speaking to a very interested woman when all of a sudden her eyes opened wide and her mouth dropped. I asked, 'What's the matter?' No answer, except the stare of fear. I turned around and faced a mob of eight or nine women blocking the gate of her house. Out of the corner of my eye I spotted Frieda giving me the hand signal, but it was too late. Other women were racing toward the house. I knew I could not get through the gate, so I bolted across the householder's garden, dashed across the next-door neighbor's garden, and jumped a wall, scrambling toward my bike.

"By now Frieda had started her motorcycle; mine was still padlocked. I unlocked it and hopped on the bike's seat, but my bike wouldn't start. I had the spark plug in my pocket! So I stuck the plug into the engine, kicked the starter again, and off I went. But not soon enough—and this is what everyone laughs about to this day. A woman brandishing a mop ran up from behind. She thrust the mophead down through a street sewer grating. As I was pulling away she swung the mop. Out from the mophead flung sewer slime that covered me from the top of my head all the way down my back. When I caught up with Frieda, she said: 'Boy, Mildred, pyu-u-u! When we get home, don't you go into the house!'

"When we arrived back at the missionary home, she told the other missionary sister what had happened. They laid newspapers out near the garden for me to walk on and they bucketed me with water. Oh, for days later, everyone lent me their perfume. Nevertheless, eventually quite a few people did come into the truth from that section of Dublin."

Bridie Casey remembers another incident in Dublin. She was with one missionary in the field ministry when a Catholic woman told them they were just beating their heads against a brick wall. The spirit of those missionaries was reflected in the brother's reply. "That may be so," he said, "but at least some of the stones in the wall are beginning to move!" Yes, the missionaries became a battering ram that cracked open the walls of Catholic control incarcerating the honesthearted Irish.

Olive and Arthur Matthews (inset), along with Olive's brother and his wife, used this 13-foot-long caravan during the "God's Way Is Love" booklet campaign in 1953



MOB ATTACK NEAR LIMERICK

Although the people in Ireland were basically friendly and hospitable, religious leaders were still able to spur some of them to violence. On May 13, 1956, one missionary, Stephen Miller, was traveling in field service with a new publisher in a rural area in the west of the country. Suddenly he and his companion found a mob blocking their way.

Ireland

99

They jumped on their motorcycle to escape. But the mob followed them in cars and finally trapped them on a dead-end road.

The mob, led by a priest, closed in on Brother Miller. One of the bullies punched Brother Miller on the chin. Then the mob stripped him of his literature and burned it in the center of the little village of Cloonlara near Limerick.

Later, at the court trial, the bias of the judiciary was underscored. The priest and eight other rabble-rousers were exonerated. The bully who hit Brother Miller was found guilty but set free. Then Brother Miller and his companion were bound over to keep the peace on sureties of £200 each. What a travesty of justice! The court excused the mob and punished those attacked! Although the city of Dublin was improving in its treatment of the Witnesses, many rural areas still stubbornly clung to their medieval viewpoints and actions.

DISQUIETING DOUBLE STANDARDS

The injustice and prejudice against Jehovah's Witnesses were just too blatant to pass unnoticed. The resultant publicity in newspapers all over the Republic brought a wave of protest and indignation. One Protestant clergyman, who was not at all blinded by the religious smoke screen designed to confuse the issues, made a powerful point in the *Dublin Evening Mail* of July 28, 1956, under the heading "Religious Freedom":

"Members of the Legion of Mary visit parishioners of mine to propagate doctrines of which I strongly disapprove. May I take it that I can now band my people together, lay hands on the

Legionnaires, burn their books (and perhaps give one a bash on the chin just to show that we are Christian too!), and then expect that if they complain they will be bound over to keep the peace, and we go free?

"Or is there to be one law for the Legion of Mary and another for Jehovah's witnesses?"

Many others, while they did not agree with the doctrines of Jehovah's Witnesses, felt that the provision regarding freedom of religion in the Constitution of the Republic of Ireland should be respected. Article 44 of the Constitution states: "Freedom of conscience and the free profession and practice of religion are, subject to public order and morality, guaranteed to every citizen."

However, the antipathy toward Jehovah's people and the resistance to their work was still deep-seated. Later that same year in a local Limerick newspaper, the following appeal was made to Catholic readers:

"We appeal most earnestly to any person who may be accosted by representatives of the Society [Jehovah's Witnesses] to have nothing to do with their propaganda and to refuse firmly to enter into any discussions with them. Any copies of their publications which readers may have acquired should be destroyed immediately. So strongly does the Church wish us to shun their evil doctrines that any Catholic who reads publications of the Society leaves himself open to excommunication. Ireland's heritage of Faith, retained through centuries of persecution, is not to be bartered for a mess of Brooklyn pottage."

"GOD'S WAY IS LOVE"

In shining forth Kingdom light, one special campaign stands out. The 1954 *Yearbook* called it "without doubt the greatest contribution to the preaching of the truth in Eire [Republic of Ireland]." What was that? The countrywide distribution of the booklet *God's Way Is Love*. This 32-page booklet, with four green harps on its cover, quoted exclusively from Catholic editions of the Bible. It had a special appeal to Catholic people in its clear and simple presentation of basic Bible doctrines. Arthur Matthews, now Branch Committee coordinator for Ireland, and his wife, Olive, along with Olive's brother and his wife, made up one party engaged in this exciting work.

"We pooled our resources," Brother Matthews said, "and we were able to buy an old Morris 10 car at a bargain price. None of us could drive, but on a quiet road near 'Ma' Rutland's, we soon got the hang of it. Within a couple of days we set off into the country with all our witnessing equipment piled into the car."

However, they were unsuccessful in their search for accommodations, so they bedded down for a very cold and sleepless night in the car. Next day they decided to buy a caravan, or trailer. There was danger in this, since brothers' caravans had been attacked and vandalized in the past, but they had no alternative. By selling some of their possessions, they were able to get the money to buy a 13-foot-long caravan. And although they had hair-raising experiences towing it over the rough and sometimes mountainous roads, at least their housing problem was solved.

They had a large area to cover, since there was not a single publisher south of the Dublin area all the way to the city of Cork, 160 miles to the south. To accomplish as much as possible, the group started field service each morning at 8:00. They traveled to the most distant point in their chosen territory and then worked back toward their caravan site. To prevent any attacks on their property, when they began preaching in areas near where they had parked the caravan, they would move it to a new site. When they got to large towns, they tried to call on all the people before Sunday, when the priest would almost inevitably assail them from his pulpit.

The two hardy couples found many people who had never met Jehovah's Witnesses. Frequently householders declared that they were forbidden by their church even to read the Scriptures. "Therefore," said Brother Matthews, "in addition to circulating the booklet *God's Way Is Love*, we also carried copies of the Catholic Douay Bible, which we used and offered to the people."

This booklet helped the brothers dismiss the idea of calling on just the Protestant people. Everyone was reached. They distributed at least 20,000 copies of this booklet in the eastern part of the country, while another group did a similar work on the western side. And they found many people hospitable. "We never had to buy potatoes or milk or suchlike," said Brother and Sister Matthews.

AT LAST—A KINGDOM HALL IN DUBLIN!

Up to this time the congregation in Dublin had met in all sorts of places, none of them comfortable.

At one meeting place, a loft over a laundry's horse stables, it was not unusual to look up and see rats scampering along the rafters. Therefore the brothers decided it was time to get a place for their exclusive use. After much searching they were able to lease a structure that had been used as a garage on James Place, a small side street off Baggot Street on the south side of Dublin.

To convert this old property into a suitable Kingdom Hall became a project for robust hearts. By dint of tremendous effort the brothers renovated the old building into a beautiful Kingdom Hall. There were 134 present for the dedication of the hall in 1953.

On December 3, 1954, the new Kingdom Hall hosted special visitors from world headquarters—Brothers Frederick W. Franz and Grant Suiter. Present to hear these brothers speak were more than 20 missionaries, who were setting the island on fire with their Kingdom preaching.

In the following years the Dublin Kingdom Hall also served as the location for all the circuit assemblies held in the Republic. Can you visualize 200 or so brothers and sisters squeezing into a tiny space, 22 feet by 45 feet? Two people could not pass on the narrow stairway that led to the upstairs section. During the assemblies, when food was prepared upstairs, it had to be passed from hand to hand, one plate at a time, to those waiting downstairs. It was nothing as pleasant as modern-day Kingdom Halls, but compared to some of the places they had been using, it was paradise.

BRANCH OFFICE ESTABLISHED

The year 1957 saw a fine step forward for the work in Ireland. Brother Knorr arranged for a separate branch office to be established in Dublin. Until then Dublin had been used as a literature depot, with the work being supervised by the Britain branch.

This new branch, set up in a three-story house at 86 Lindsay Road in the north side, could now

First branch office in Ireland, 86 Lindsay Road, Dublin



concentrate all of its attention on the specific needs of the field in Ireland. However, for the time being, Northern Ireland remained under the direction of the Britain branch. The work in the Republic of Ireland was now to be supervised from the new branch office.

CHRISTENDOM'S FAILURE HIGHLIGHTED

In the face of continued religious scorn, the brothers hammered away at exposing Christendom for what she was. One instrument they used was the November 1, 1958, issue of *The Watchtower*. It contained a resolution from the Divine Will Assemblies of that year that highlighted the total failure on the part of Christendom to direct people to God's Kingdom as the real remedy for mankind's ills.

The magazine was widely distributed among the clergy in Ireland. And what a response it drew! One copy was returned with the word "baloney" scribbled over the front page. Another, returned by a clergyman, had this message:

"Do not send this trash to me again . . . You are doing the Devil's work and you are doing it for money . . . Leave the good Irish people alone. They are not going to be influenced by you anyway. Again: Do not post this trash to me again. I did not read a single word of it."

But some of "the good Irish people" did have a hunger for the truth and were responding. Most people, though, found it difficult to believe that a spirit of genuine altruism and love moved the brothers to use their time and resources to help others learn the truth. They found it equally

difficult to believe that those who responded to the truth did not do it for money. Numerous false stories circulated of how interested ones got money or other benefits when they listened to the Witnesses.

ATTACKED BY A MOB IN WEXFORD

The climate for declaring the good news in Ireland was slowly improving. But not all people were disposed to listen peacefully to the Kingdom message. For example, let us go to the picturesque town of Wexford, in the southeast of Ireland. The year is 1960.

Brother and Sister Alex Turner had been in Wexford for about ten months, when trouble erupted. Brother Turner was in the house-to-house work. As he was talking to some people, a priest walked up behind him. "Give me that filthy literature," the priest shouted, trying to snatch away Brother Turner's witnessing bag. A crowd, which included a second priest, gathered. When Brother Turner refused to hand over his bag, he was assaulted and beaten. However, he and his wife slipped away and went to the police station to report the attack.

Although there were no publishers living in Wexford at the time, the local community seethed over the activities of these pioneers. This hatred boiled over into the judiciary. Some of the comments of the district justice during the ensuing trial illustrate this well:

"I am forced to the conclusion that this case has been promoted and forced in the theatrical sense with the sole object of providing publicity for the

Jehovah Witnesses; that these people are engaged in a conspiracy to discredit what they consider rival clergy; that they are engaged in what seems to me a short-sighted and foredoomed attempt to proselytise the people of this country and county. They are forcing and have been forcing their unwelcome attentions on unwilling auditors. . . . I feel strongly that these people have mounted an attack upon the traditional faith of the people of Wexford, an attack that has failed, will fail and must fail."

There was little doubt where the sympathies of the magistrate lay and little likelihood that justice would be done. Before the court, both priests denied assaulting Brother Turner. But they were found guilty of technical assault—and then allowed to go scot-free!

Newspapers all over Ireland and Britain reported the events. The court case produced a hostile reaction initially. But it did, in fact, have some good effects. Adverse newspaper publicity regarding the unlawful actions of the priests and mob seemed to restrain such illegal behavior. When passions cooled, reasonable people saw that violence of this kind was unacceptable.

In fact, some time later, after a congregation was established in Wexford, one of the priests involved in the attack accepted a copy of the book *The Truth That Leads to Eternal Life* and apologized to one of the brothers for his part in the incident.

PIONEERS' PRESENCE FELT

On the west side of the country, too, the pioneers continued to make their presence felt. Here is how

one local newspaper described their work: "Donegal has been invaded once again by a plague of pests far more cunning than foxes or badgers. An army of men and women, some of them touring around on motor scooters, make a house-to-house call in town and country, leaving their free magazines."

How large was this "army"? Two pioneer sisters on a motor scooter! What provoked this reaction? It was the wide distribution of the special *Awake!* of October 8, 1960, entitled "The Catholic Church in the 20th Century." The newspaper description of the witnessing work done by the two pioneers reminds us of the 'locust army' described by the apostle John at Revelation 9:1-10.

Pioneers like these played a large role in getting the good news of the Kingdom preached during the 1950's and 1960's. Only four or five congregations were operating in the Republic of Ireland at the time. Elsewhere there were just small isolated groups of pioneers and publishers, who showed a willingness to put up with all sorts of deprivations and difficulties to accomplish their ministry.

Obtaining secure lodging was still a big problem for the pioneers in isolated assignments. In the majority of towns it was almost impossible to get a place to stay. Many of the special pioneers found it easier to rent unfurnished cottages in rural areas outside the towns, with less likelihood of eviction. The Society then provided furniture, for which the pioneers paid a nominal rent. These cottages also served as meeting places for interested people. As

hostility lessened, the special pioneers were able to move into the towns. The diligence of the pioneers was a major factor in the growth of the number of Witnesses in the Republic from 211 publishers in 1962 to 253 in 1965.

INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION —DUBLIN, 1965

When it was announced that Jehovah's Witnesses were going to hold an international convention in Dublin in 1965, consternation rose among the populace. As events unfolded, it became obvious that a number of people did not want the convention to take place.

"It was a saga of difficulties—just one thing after another that would seem to make it impossible for the convention to go ahead," said Arthur Matthews, supervisor for the convention arrangements. "But the struggle to prepare for, and actually hold, the convention generated a fine spirit among all the brothers." How did they fight discouragement as the problems multiplied? Brother Matthews displayed a card on his desk that quoted Proverbs 24:10: "Have you shown yourself discouraged in the day of distress? Your power will be scanty."

Bigoted opposition reared its ugly head among some members of the city council. They held the authority to deny the use of the football grounds that had been hired for the convention. One councillor labeled the Witnesses "a menace," and other members strongly urged that the Witnesses should not be allowed the use of the facilities. However, another councillor wisely pointed out that it would

be a poor thing if permission to hold the convention was withheld in a country that had itself been the victim of religious persecution for years.

Bord Failte (the Irish Tourist Board) was in favor of the convention's going ahead. "Is Bord Failte trying to make the Irish nation the laughing stock of the world?" wrote one angry protester to the local newspaper. "Its attitude must constitute a far greater threat to the Catholic Church than the activities of Jehovah's Witnesses and all other promoters of false religion put together."

One correspondent compared the Witnesses to the infamous Ku Klux Klan and the Mafia and asked, "Does anybody want these people here?" This prompted a sympathetic reply that stated that the writer who had attacked Jehovah's Witnesses "should hang his or her head in shame."

OVERCOMING ALL OBSTACLES

Finally, permission was granted for the convention to go ahead. But the problems were only beginning. It proved impossible to hire a nearby site for feeding facilities. This was a major concern until the stadium management said that the brothers could erect a marquee, or tent, on the soccer field itself. The local men who delivered the marquee to the grounds, however, refused to erect it. So the brothers, with little experience in such things, were left to do this on their own. Jehovah stepped in with some help. Men from another firm, who were delivering tables and chairs, were also skilled in erecting marquees. When they saw the dilemma, they offered much practical, expert assistance and advice to the brothers.

Arthur Hewson, convention overseer, remembered how difficult it was to find rooms for all the expected delegates. "As fast as rooms could be obtained, the priests would exert pressure and the accommodation would be canceled," he said. "All in all, 50 percent of the rooms obtained were canceled, and even some of the hotels were found to be 'full up' when inquiries were made." Some days more rooms were canceled than were obtained.

The brothers pushed on with the confidence that if it was Jehovah's will, the convention would take place. Eventually sufficient suitable accommodations were found in the homes of Dublin people for more than 3,500 of Jehovah's Witnesses. With what local effect? Prejudice against the Witnesses started to crumble. "We have not been told the truth about you," commented some of the landladies after the convention. "The priests lied to us, but now that we know you, we will always be happy to have you again."

Despite the mountain-high acts of conspiracy to make the convention a failure, nothing succeeded. "I have never been to an assembly where Jehovah's spirit was not present," said Brother Hewson, "but I have never attended an assembly before or since where Jehovah's spirit was so manifest." The very intensity of the opposition made the victory more noteworthy. It strengthened the confidence of the brothers in Jehovah's promise: "They will certainly fight against you, but they will not prevail over you. For I am with you, to save you and to deliver you."—Jer. 15:20.

A REAL BREAKTHROUGH

This 1965 international convention marked a definite turning point in the activities of Jehovah's people in Ireland. It generated a great deal of publicity, much of it very favorable. For the first time national television showed scenes from inside a convention of Jehovah's Witnesses. Good news coverage was given also to the immersion. Since no indoor location could be hired, the brothers arranged to hold the baptism in the open sea, in an open-air bathing spot out along a breakwater in Dublin Bay. There, braving lashing rain and bitterly cold winds, 65 people symbolized their dedication to Jehovah.

On the final day of the convention, Frederick W. Franz (who later became the fourth president of the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society) delivered a stirring talk on the subject "World Government on the Shoulder of the Prince of Peace" to an audience of 3,948. Prepared with the Catholic population of Ireland very much in mind, he quoted exclusively from the Catholic Douay Bible. What a marvelous witness!

ALL IRELAND UNDER ONE BRANCH

The following year, 1966, brought another excellent spiritual advance—the whole country, north and south, came under the direction of the branch office in Dublin. Politically and religiously, Ireland was as divided as ever, but now Jehovah's people were united in every way. That year saw 268 Witnesses in the Republic of Ireland and 474 in Northern Ireland, a grand brotherhood of 742 working together to do Jehovah's will.

NEUTRALITY DESPITE PRESSURES

The turbulent years of the 1970's and 1980's saw nationalistic movements grow and acts of terrorism escalate, especially in Northern Ireland. The result? A growing polarization of the Catholic and Protestant communities in this northeastern part of the island.

Norman Richards was one of the circuit overseers in Northern Ireland when the troubles began. He remembers how the brothers were pressured to take sides.

"Efforts were made to get the brothers to support nighttime vigilante patrols and to join in erecting barricades to seal off their areas," said Brother Richards. "The vigilantes asked for contributions to pay for the supplies they needed to defend their area. And they tried to hang nationalistic flags on all the buildings."

The brothers stood firm in the face of intimidation. None compromised, and it soon became obvious to all that they were totally neutral in this struggle. People soon realized the Witnesses' attitude toward warfare, their view of flags, and their determination to be "no part of the world."—John 17:16; Isa. 2:2-4; 1 Cor. 10:14; 1 John 5:21.

Usually, when the brothers made their position clear, it roused animosity in the community. Neighbors who supported paramilitary activities often refused to talk to the brothers. But, in time, as the brothers continued to be kind and helpful in ways that were Scripturally acceptable, they were once again accepted by the community, and their position of strict neutrality was recognized.

LEARNING TO LIVE WITH THE TROUBLES

When violence was at its peak, there was an ever-present danger of shootings and bombings in different parts of the province. Evening witnessing slowed down because people feared opening their doors after dark. But the return-visit activity and the home Bible study work continued apace.

Understandably, people were frightened of callers they did not recognize. "One Sunday afternoon," Brother Richards remembered, "we knocked on a door and a man cautiously opened it. We identified ourselves and told him why we were calling. He took his hand from behind his back, and we saw that it held a loaded revolver. 'I am a policeman,' he said, 'and I thought you might be from the IRA.'"

How did the brothers adjust to living under such warlike conditions? They followed Jesus' advice in Matthew 10:16 to be "cautious," avoiding any foolhardy actions. While in the ministry, if a bomb exploded nearby, they would just incorporate it into their presentation, saying something like: "Do you know that God promises there will be an end to that sort of thing?" and then continue with their discussion. Of course, violence did not strike all parts of Northern Ireland; nor were there outbursts of terrorist activity all the time. "We weren't daily dodging bombs and bullets," said one brother. "Most of the time was trouble-free."

GOING EVERYWHERE WITH THE GOOD NEWS

In the early 1970's paramilitary activists had warned the brothers that they would be shot if

they entered certain areas. Caution dictated a temporary withdrawal. Thus, a number of the Catholic areas in Belfast were not being covered in the witness work. One of the brothers explained how they resumed witnessing in these areas. He lived at the edge of Catholic and Protestant estates in Belfast. He and his wife took their young child with them in the pram, or baby carriage, and gradually worked more and more into the Catholic section, soon being joined by two of the special pioneers. Gradually they became more accepted, and soon they had organized group witnessing arrangements in these areas as other publishers joined them.

What protected the Witnesses in the Catholic areas? Their neutrality. One experience illustrates this: "About three or four months after we began working in one area, a man invited us into a house. In the course of the discussion, he told us that Jehovah's Witnesses were welcome in that area. He recognized our neutrality in political matters, which he said was so different from the activity of many priests. When I mentioned that I had been calling in the area for some time, he was able to tell us the time and place of our first entry into the area and that we had been watched ever since!"

On one occasion the army stopped this brother and took him to the army headquarters for questioning. They wanted him to become an informer for their security forces and to be a spy as he went about his preaching work. However, after explaining his neutral position regarding politics as one of Jehovah's Witnesses, they let him go.

A number of brothers from England had moved to a congregation in a town near the border between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. In a period of two to three years, around 200 bombings, besides almost nightly rioting and shooting, had demolished the town center. But during all this time the brothers felt Jehovah's hand of protection. Sometimes the local people warned the Witnesses before trouble erupted. Despite the constant unrest, the brothers always held their meetings and continued with their ministry. "The security forces were sometimes denied access to certain areas," said one local Witness, "but the brothers were always able to go in to do their preaching work, even though a number of them were English, because they had always made their neutrality clear."

MISTAKEN IDENTITY

On occasions, though, some publishers in the preaching work found themselves in a dangerous spot. By trusting in Jehovah and remaining calm, the brothers escaped serious injury. For example, a young special pioneer brother was mistaken for a member of the security forces. He explains:

"I was making some return visits in a housing estate that was known to have strong IRA sympathies, when a car pulled up. One of the occupants pointed a gun at me and ordered me to get into the car. The men in the car immediately searched me. At first I thought I was going to be shot because they had mistaken me for a soldier in plain clothes. I was driven to a house and locked in a small shed for what seemed like a lifetime. Then

I was taken out, blindfolded, and led into a house where I was questioned at length regarding who I was and what I was doing in that area. Right from the start I had been praying to Jehovah that I would not give them any reason to overreact to anything I said or did.

"I explained that I was one of Jehovah's Witnesses and that I was only interested in helping people to understand the Bible. I could hear several men going through the contents of my service bag and commenting on my house-to-house records. One of the men left the room, saying: 'Keep the gun on him, and if he makes any move at all—blow his head off!' At length this man returned. He must have been able to corroborate my story because he told the others I could be released. Still blindfolded and at gunpoint, I was taken back to the car and released near the town center.

"I am sure that Jehovah's spirit kept me totally calm, able to say and do the right things so that they accepted that I was completely neutral. That same afternoon my partner accompanied me on a prearranged return visit on an interested person in the same housing estate, and we subsequently worked there frequently without being troubled again."

RECOGNIZED AS WITNESSES

On another occasion two of the pioneers were working in the little border town of Crossmaglen just inside Northern Ireland. They were strangers to many in the area. Unknown to them, leaflets had recently been distributed by the IRA to warn

the people in the town of the impending arrival of a special unit of the British Army, the SAS—a highly trained unit that often operated out of uniform. The local people suspected that the pioneer brothers were members of the SAS unit.

Ready to return home after completing their field service calls, the brothers stopped for a cup of coffee while waiting for the bus. They asked the woman in the shop if the bus had arrived in town. Angrily she accused them of being soldiers and then stormed out. The brothers also left the shop. As they stood waiting for the bus, some men arrived by car, went into the coffee shop, shortly thereafter exited the shop, and then drove slowly around the square to where the brothers were waiting and asked them some questions. The brothers believed that they were IRA gunmen. The brothers tell us what happened next:

“The bus arrived, an old, battered vehicle. We paid our fares and boarded. Then we noticed that the men who had questioned us were in earnest conversation with the bus driver. Soon afterward the bus started off, but at the same time the car full of men drove off. We feared that some arrangement had been made to rendezvous on some quiet country road outside the town. Only the night before a minibus had been stopped in the area, and ten men had been lined up and shot, nine of them killed.

“The long miles home seemed endless, but as we approached the town we realized nothing was going to happen. As we asked the driver to stop to let us off the bus, he asked, ‘Tell me, do you have

any of your books?’ Evidently he knew us, and we gave him the latest copies of *The Watchtower* and *Awake!* Then we asked him who the men were who had questioned us. ‘Ah, don’t worry,’ he replied. ‘I knew who you were. I put them right. Don’t worry at all. You’re quite safe now!’”

RESPONSIVE EARS IN CATHOLIC TERRITORIES

For years in Northern Ireland most of the response to the truth had been seen in Protestant areas. But now more and more Catholics manifested interest as they began seeing that this system had nothing to offer them and that the church had failed to stick to Bible principles. One young Catholic man, working as a nurse, was contacted in the house-to-house work. What were his reactions?

“They were English,” he said about the brothers who called on him, “and my attitude initially was that no foreigner should come and teach us religion in Ireland.” However, the brothers skillfully used the Bible to answer his objections and questions. After his scorn turned to respect, he accepted a copy of the book *The Truth That Leads to Eternal Life*. He yearned to know more about God’s Word, since he realized that he knew nothing about the Bible even though three of his uncles were Catholic priests. His work situation changed, however, and he lost contact with the brothers.

As the troubles in Northern Ireland mounted, he saw firsthand in the hospital where he worked the horrifying effects of shootings and bombings. Trying to escape these horrors, he began to smoke

and drink heavily. He could not help but ask, "Why is all of this happening? Why does God allow it?" Nevertheless, through it all, he remembered his first contact with the truth, and he realized that the answers did lie in the Bible. He started to straighten his life out and prayed to God for help.

When he visited his parents' home, a delightful surprise awaited him. His younger brother was studying the Bible with Jehovah's Witnesses! "We sat up till four o'clock in the morning discussing the things my brother was learning," he explained. "It was marvelous to learn that there was a God who cares, who will clean the earth and remove sickness and death. I just had to learn more."

He returned to his job in Londonderry. One morning the doorbell rang. Normally he would not have heard the bell, since he worked a night shift, but this time he awoke and sleepily went to the door. Two sisters, thinking no one was at home, were on their way back down the path. He asked them if they were Jehovah's Witnesses. "When they said yes, my heart leapt with joy," he recounts, "and I asked them for a Bible study!" In common with many others of Catholic background, he made rapid progress into the truth.

SEEING THE REAL SOLUTION TO THE TROUBLES

In another strongly Catholic area of Belfast, two young women were entangled in the political struggle and the paramilitary activities of the day. Eventually it dawned on them that this was not the way things should be. They began to question

the hatred seen in their associates, as well as the lack of respect for life demonstrated by individuals who were willing to maim and kill in the interests of their cause.

When one of the publishers called at their home and talked about the truth, they first were skeptical. But gradually they came to see that God's promise of a government that would set matters straight on the earth was the only practical solution to the problems plaguing Belfast. (Ps. 46:8, 9; Isa. 2:4; Dan. 2:44) Initially it was difficult for them to believe that anyone could be neutral in an environment like theirs, but as they associated with the friends at the Kingdom Hall, they saw that Christian neutrality was possible. They came to experience the real unity and love demonstrated among Christ's followers and soon came along into the truth.—John 13:34, 35.

JEHOVAH KEEPS MAKING IT GROW

Jehovah can make the seed of truth grow in the hearts of people, even though dormant for years. (1 Cor. 3:6, 7) Such ones can suddenly make quick progress into the truth. This was illustrated for one sister who was engaged in street witnessing.

"I was rather unnerved to see a man with a bag of shopping in each hand bear down on me very purposefully," she said. "He stopped, put his bags down, and asked if I was one of Jehovah's Witnesses. When I said I was, he asked for a copy of 'the red book,' *You Can Live Forever in Paradise on Earth*. Then came the surprise. He asked if someone could call and have a Bible study with him!"

This man had received a copy of the book *"Babylon the Great Has Fallen!" God's Kingdom Rules!* from a workmate in 1963. He read it, saw that this was the truth, but did nothing about it. Later, while still single, he prayed to Jehovah, making a promise that if Jehovah would provide him with a wife and children, he would raise his children to serve Jehovah. Now, some 20 years later, married and with four children, he had still not fulfilled that promise. Because of personal problems, he was in danger of losing his family.

Seeing his spiritual need, he searched out the brothers. He knew from one of his neighbors which street corner the Witnesses could be found on every Saturday around lunchtime. So off he went to find them. From the start he began attending meetings regularly, bringing his children with him. And as he appreciated more about Jehovah's standards, he began to make changes in his life. About two months after recontacting the brothers, he came to his first circuit assembly, which gave him the strength to quit the tobacco habit.

Then came a real test. As a result of opposition from her family, his wife refused to speak to him for weeks and eventually threatened to separate from him if he did not give up the truth. It was ironic that the very thing he had come into the truth to save, namely his marriage, was now being threatened as a result of serving Jehovah. However, he wisely reasoned that by forsaking the truth now, he would eventually lose everything for himself and his family. So he stood firm. As it

turned out, his wife did not really want a separation but was merely succumbing to family pressure. Now she acknowledges that if it had not been for her husband's becoming one of Jehovah's Witnesses, they would no longer be together.

CONTINUED GROWTH ALSO IN THE REPUBLIC

In the Republic of Ireland, too, the persistence of the brothers and sisters in shining the light of the truth everywhere began to bring fine results.

One Catholic couple had been grieved by the death of their four-year-old daughter. Some people said she had to die "because God wanted her in heaven" and that "she was never meant for this world." This did not make any sense to those grieving parents. "We were good Catholics," they said. "We went to Mass and we believed in God, but we could not understand why she had to die!"

The mother began to study, but her husband, at first, was not attracted to the truth. 'No birthdays! No Christmas! Having to go to all those meetings! Having to give up the cigarettes! This is not for me,' he thought. But deep down he admired his wife for her growing devotion to Jehovah. At first when the brothers came for the Bible study, he would escape out the back door. Later, however, he stayed to listen and began to value the truth.

He was shocked to learn that Jehovah was, in fact, the true God. "I thought he was some American millionaire," he said. Eventually the family was united in serving Jehovah. Their faith in the true God gave them great fortitude when their eldest boy died quite suddenly of leukemia. "If we

had not known the truth and not had the friends in the congregation, we would have killed ourselves," he confessed.

Another Catholic man was stumped by all the injustice and suffering in the world. The Vietnam war, the horrors of Biafra, the millions of people dying of starvation in a world of plenty—it all seemed so wrong. To blot out these tragic realities, he began to drink heavily. When he was contacted with the Bible message, the reasons for this horrible satanic system of things were explained to him.

He progressed in the truth and got fully involved in Jehovah's service. When visiting some brothers in Belfast, he joined with them in the house-to-house work in a Loyalist (anti-Nationalist) area of the city. Before this, he would never have even thought of visiting Northern Ireland, let alone ventured into Loyalist areas. Yet, here he was. He was invited into one home, and the householder realized that the brother had been a Catholic. So he asked: "When you were a Catholic, did you support the IRA?" The brother realized that this man could turn violent, since he had only recently been released from detention after being caught with a gun when going to kill a Catholic. So the brother said: "I am not a Catholic now. I am one of the Christian witnesses of Jehovah. As a true Christian, I would never kill anyone for any government or any man." With that the householder shook his hand and said: "All killing is wrong. You people are doing good work. Keep it up."

SERVING WHERE THE NEED IS GREATER

Of great help in speeding up the work in Ireland was the willingness of many brothers from other lands to move to serve where the need was greater. They responded to a call similar to that heard by the apostle Paul: "Step over into Macedonia and help us." (Acts 16:9) It called for a deep love for Jehovah and a real spirit of self-sacrifice. But the results and the rewards have been outstanding.

Of course, there were difficulties to overcome, such as finding employment and arranging schooling for the children. But these brothers and sisters put Jehovah to the test, and he never failed them. "Our children settled in easily," said one couple, "and we found that we have a greater involvement in spiritual things as a family as a result of moving here." One family head commented on how his own family benefited from their move to Ireland. "It has helped us to avoid being sidetracked into worldly things," he said, "and we have achieved a goal of pioneering as a family."

Closely related to this has been the support given to congregations by courageous pioneers, most of whom came from Britain. Some even settled in Ireland after they had families of their own. Many pioneer couples originally came to Ireland with the idea of staying a year or two and then returning to their homeland. Some did this, and they made a fine contribution to the advancement of the work here. Others, though, were able to stay in Ireland.

The normal way of things in Ireland is for married couples to have large families and to have children as quickly as possible. Irish people, therefore, often thought it unusual to see pioneer couples without

children. When local people discovered that the pioneers who were visiting them had no children, it often brought the solicitous comment, "I'll light a candle for you!" Once those pioneer couples who stayed in the local community had children, they were much more accepted by the local people. This had a stabilizing effect on the congregations. Instead of a regular turnover of pioneers in various assignments, there came to be an added permanence about things.

About 30 of the 80 congregations have a fine nucleus of elders and other publishers from the families of pioneers who settled here. In one congregation four out of the five elders originally came to Ireland as pioneers. Why did they stay? Their answers: "It has become home to us." "We wanted to continue serving where the need was great." "There seemed no point in returning to where a great need did not exist." Jehovah blessed their ministry. By 1982 there were 2,021 Witnesses in Ireland.

With the work prospering both in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland, it was to be expected that the demons would get even busier in their efforts to hinder progress. One weapon they turned to again was apostasy.

APOSTASY ONCE AGAIN IN DUBLIN

During 1982 a particularly virulent form of apostasy developed, mainly in the Dublin area. Some brothers began to resent the authority of the congregation and to question the body of teachings that are accepted by Jehovah's people as truth. They promoted the idea that each Christian should be able to decide for himself on various matters of doctrine.

Quietly and surreptitiously they sowed seeds of doubt in the minds of others regarding doctrine. The integrity of members of the Governing Body was questioned. The dissenters who were serving as elders and ministerial servants minimized organizational instructions. From the platform, and at other times secretly, they disseminated their own ideas, undermining the confidence of others in Jehovah's organization.

As this rebellious attitude became more and more manifest, the loyal elders in the congregations tried to help such ones regain their spiritual balance and faith and thereby avoid spiritual shipwreck. (1 Tim. 1:19) The loyal were aware of the dangers of just such a situation, as foretold by both the apostle Paul and the apostle Peter.—Acts 20:30; 2 Pet. 2:1, 3.

John Barr, from the Governing Body, and Robert Pevy, who had pioneered in Ireland and who is now serving at Brooklyn Bethel, offered assistance. They took time from vacation trips in Britain to come to Ireland to talk with the brothers and encourage them. They reasoned at length with the brothers and discussed thoroughly many questions raised on doctrinal matters. It became obvious, however, that the questions raised by the disgruntled ones were merely a smoke screen. The real issue was whether this was, in fact, Jehovah's organization or not.

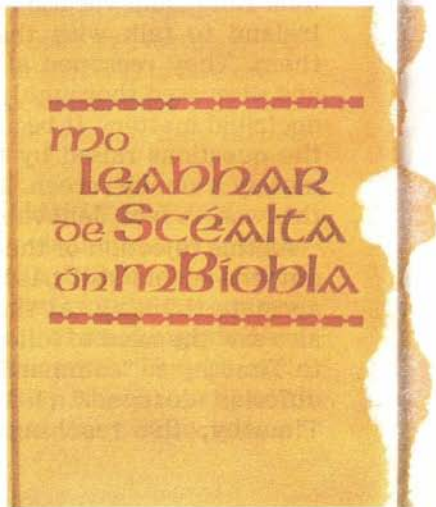
As this rejection of the truth became more apparent, the elders still tried to help those affected by apostate thinking. At the same time, though, they also saw the need to follow the apostle Paul's advice to Timothy to "command certain ones not to teach different doctrine." (1 Tim. 1:3) As Paul warned Timothy, the teachings of such apostate ones

"spread like gangrene." The elders were left eventually with no real alternative except to expel such ones from the congregation.—2 Tim. 2:17.

The removal of those who rejected God's organization allowed the work to prosper. In 1982, when the apostasy began, there was an average of 2,021 Jehovah's Witnesses in Ireland. In 1983 this grew to 2,124, in 1984 it was 2,278, in 1985 it was 2,403, and in 1986 it was 2,472, with a peak of 2,661 in May 1987. The steady progress continues. Loyalties had been tested to the full, but the great majority had put their loyalty to Jehovah and his organization before loyalty to any man. They recognized where the truth lay and from what source they had learned it, and they stuck firmly with it. They kept busy with the vital preaching and teaching work.

"MY BOOK OF BIBLE STORIES" IN IRISH

For years all that Jehovah's people had available in the Irish language was a tract or two and a booklet. It was with great excitement, therefore, that they received *My Book of Bible Stories* in Irish at their district convention in 1982. English is the language generally used in Ireland. Over the past few years, however, there has been a resurgence of interest in the Irish language (an old-



er Celtic language). In some parts of the country (Gaeltacht areas) it is the only language used. Now the brothers had something substantial to offer in these areas, especially to people with an interest in their native tongue.

Many schoolteachers, including priests and those in the Catholic teaching orders of "Christian Brothers," accepted copies of *Mo Leabhar de Scéalta ón mBíobla*, as it is in Irish. The way this book was received illustrates the improved attitude of many towards Jehovah's Witnesses. One teaching priest, slightly exaggerating the situation, made the comment: "If we had accepted literature from you 30 years ago, we would have been burned at the stake!"

At one school two sisters met the principal, who was a nun. When the Witnesses preached to her outside the staff room, she examined the book and then quickly said, "Wait a minute." A few minutes later she reappeared with money in her hand and said, "I'll have nine copies, please." At another school, the teacher in charge of book purchases for the school looked over the *Bible Stories* book in Irish and ordered a classroom set of 35.

Others besides those in the teaching profession are drawn to the marvelously simple presentation of the Bible record in this book. Some who would not normally take literature from Jehovah's Witnesses have accepted copies.

One brother called on a lady for whom he had done some secular work. When he mentioned having the new book in Irish, she said she was "not a bit interested in anything to do with Jehovah's Witnesses." However, he did show her the book. "I don't suppose

vah's Witnesses were simply interested in helping everyone to understand the Bible. That is why they had printed a book like this. She took a copy of the *Bible Stories* book. On a subsequent call she asked, "Doesn't this book use the name Jehovah a bit too often?" She was very surprised when the brother showed her from her own children's dictionary that Jehovah really is God's name and that it appears over 7,000 times in the original Bible writings.

Another sister called on all her neighbors with the *Bible Stories* book, both in English and in Irish. Her children go to school with many of the children on her housing estate, and she realized that she had never really spoken to her neighbors about the truth. She prayed to Jehovah to strengthen her and set off to witness. Because she was recognized as their neighbor, she was invited into many homes and had some fine discussions. In the end she placed 75 *Bible Stories* books!

EXPANSION AND INCREASED BUILDING ACTIVITY

The increasing numbers of people accepting the truth created another need in Ireland—the need for larger branch facilities and better meeting places for the congregations.

In 1980 new branch premises were dedicated in Dublin. For many years the branch building had been cramped. Fred Metcalfe explains how the lack of space created some difficulties: "Sometimes we had to use the dining room table for typing and other office work. We had to go down to the end of the garden for literature for the congregations. The shed there was the only suitable storage space we had."



Present branch building in Finglas, Dublin, and Branch Committee members, left to right: Peter Andrews, Arthur Matthews (Branch Committee coordinator), and Fred Metcalfe

it has the imprimatur in it?" she asked. The brother acknowledged that the book did not have this Roman Catholic mark of approval, but he showed the lady how the book had all the Scripture references set out at the end of each story. "And what's in it for Jehovah's Witnesses?" she asked, still somewhat hesitant. The brother explained to her that Jeho-

After 12 years of searching, the brothers located and purchased a suitable piece of land, for which the Witnesses in Ireland contributed most of the funds. A fine branch office was built that gave bigger and better facilities for handling the growing volume of work as Ireland experienced an upsurge in the ingathering work. The Kingdom Hall that was incorporated in the branch building not only provided a much needed meeting place for growing congregations but also awakened interest in building other Kingdom Halls and set new standards for them.

Very few congregations up till that time had their own Kingdom Halls. Either they lacked the necessary resources because the publishers were few in number or it proved impossible to rent fitting premises because of prejudice. Some congregations met in small rooms atop many flights of stairs. The meeting places were cold and damp, with few heating facilities. One congregation used a building that had corrugated iron sides. Local children used to take great delight in rattling sticks along the sides of that hall while the meetings were in progress.

A number of the small congregations still meet in hired rooms in hotels and other places, but a growing number have been able to build Kingdom Halls. These brothers and sisters have gladly followed the advice: "Honor Jehovah with your valuable things." —Prov. 3:9.

QUICKLY BUILT KINGDOM HALLS

Construction of quickly built Kingdom Halls has excited the brothers in Ireland. Instead of building work taking months, if not years, of toil to complete, Kingdom Halls are now being built in less than two

days! This has provided congregations with excellent meeting facilities without disrupting the Kingdom-preaching work for long periods. And it has been a marvelous witness where these halls have been built.

The first quickly built hall was in Downpatrick in Northern Ireland in June 1985. The experienced building team consisted mainly of brothers from Britain who traveled to Northern Ireland entirely at their own expense. They were joined by many local brothers who were craftsmen, besides other willing volunteers. Over 600 volunteers got involved in this project.

In view of the limited number of brothers, the question when the idea was first proposed was, "Can it be done in Ireland?" The congregation went ahead with their plans with full confidence in Jehovah's backing. "We felt that we were being carried along by Jehovah," they said. And their faith was rewarded as the little congregation of only 19 publishers saw their new Kingdom Hall rapidly come to completion in front of their very eyes.

Other congregations followed. Soon Ireland had its own team for quickly building halls. How was this possible? "It was successful," said the building overseer, "because all the brothers and sisters were pulling together under the influence of Jehovah's spirit."

One congregation built its hall in less than 36 hours despite pouring rain. At another site hundreds of local Catholic people visited the construction area after attending Sunday morning Mass. Many were so impressed that they made generous contributions toward the expenses of feeding the construction workers.

HARVEST PROSPECTS BRIGHT

How things have changed over the past 80 years! One of the brothers commented that 20 years ago the special pioneers in his congregation might have been able to distribute only ten magazines in the course of a month even though they spent 150 hours in the ministry. This gave little scope for return visits. Now each congregation publisher can, on an average, distribute 13 or 14 magazines each month. Much of the bitterness and hatred of past years has vanished.

It is so much easier to engage in the ministry today, with very little likelihood of violence or mobbings. There is still opposition, but there is also a much greater willingness to listen to the truth. Over the past year 1,683 home Bible studies were conducted, showing grand potential for progress.

At the conclusion of his trip in 1891, Brother Russell commented: "England, Ireland and Scotland are fields ready and waiting to be harvested." Some may have thought, when things were at their worst, that the harvest would never be gathered and that the light of Bible truth would never penetrate the spiritual darkness that blinded the minds and hearts of people in Ireland. It took a little longer than originally anticipated, but at last we are seeing the long-hoped-for harvest. There are now 2,661 publishers in the field, in 81 congregations.

Much work remains to be done, but with Jehovah's blessing on his loyal servants in Ireland, many more will yet accept the truth. All of Jehovah's faithful people in Ireland echo the cry of Jesus Christ: "Yes, the harvest is great, but the workers are few. Therefore, beg the Master of the harvest to send out workers into his harvest."—Matt. 9:37, 38.



Top: First quickly built Kingdom Hall in the Irish Republic, completed May 1986 in Dun Laoghaire



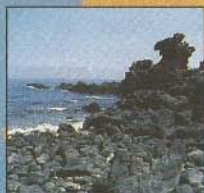
Middle and bottom: First quickly built Kingdom Hall in Northern Ireland, completed June 1985 in Downpatrick



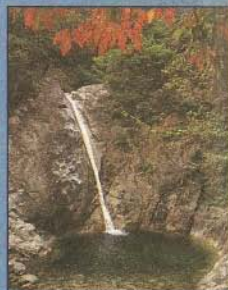
KOREA

CHINA

U.S.S.R.



Yellow Sea



Sea of Japan

Cheju

Pyongyang

Sariwon

DEMILITARIZED ZONE

Inchon

SEOUL

Han River

Ansung - Kongdo

Pyungtaek

Taejon

Kunsan

Chonju

Taegu

Pusan

Kwangju

JAPAN

Korea

137

AS SEEN from a satellite miles above, Korea is a picturesque peninsula in northeast Asia. It lies just west of the islands of Japan and is bordered on the north by China and the Soviet Union. More than 3,000 islands dot the sea along its southern and western coast, although 2,600 are not inhabited. Korea's size? Almost as large as Great Britain.

In a closer view, Korea changes into one of the hillier landscapes of the world, leaving about 20 percent of the land suitable for farming, with rice being the staple crop. Plains stretch along the western, northeastern, and southern coasts. Monsoons sweep across this country, first one way, then another, blowing in the cold, dry winters and hot, wet summers.

A face-to-face look reveals that most Koreans have physical characteristics similar to other Asians — broad face, straight black hair, olive-brown skin, and dark eyes. Yet, they are distinct in their culture, language, dress, and cuisine and lay claim to over 4,000 years of human history. Their language, belonging to the Altaic language family, is spoken today by over 60 million people.

DIVIDED LAND

Because of Korea's strategic location, nations more powerful, such as China and Japan, have long wielded a strong influence over its people. As a defense, the Korean people isolated themselves to become what has been called the hermit kingdom. In 1910 Japan imposed colonial rule over Korea that lasted until the end of World War II, at which time the peninsula was divided at the 38th parallel between the military forces of the United States in the

south and the Soviet forces in the north. In 1948, by United Nations resolution, the Republic of Korea (South Korea) was formed in the south. In the same year the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (North Korea) was formed in the north. Both governments claim to represent all of Korea.

On June 25, 1950, with the invasion of the south by the north, the three-year Korean War began. This resulted in a more permanently divided land separated by a demilitarized zone running east to west just 35 miles north of the city of Seoul. The government in the north allows no place for religion, and hence it bars the activity of Jehovah's Witnesses.

INTEREST IN THE ORIENT

The Watch Tower Society's first president, Charles Taze Russell, as chairman of the IBSA (International Bible Students Association) committee of seven, first visited the Orient early in 1912 "to see the conditions of the heathen," reported *The Watch Tower* of December 15, 1912. "As a result of that investigation it was decided that conditions in heathendom warranted the expenditure of some of the Society's funds in proclaiming the Gospel of the Kingdom there," the account continued. "Accordingly, free literature was printed in six of the principal languages," including Korean.

Agreeing with the committee's findings, Brother Robert R. Hollister represented the Association in the Orient, including Korea. He arranged for the translating and printing of the book *The Divine Plan of the Ages* in the Korean language. It was printed in Yokohama, Japan, showing its publishing date as March 18, 1914, with the publisher as the Interna-

tional Bible Students Association and R. R. Hollister as representative. Brother and Sister W. J. Hollister also spent considerable time sowing seeds of Kingdom truth in Korea.

FIRST DEDICATED KOREAN

The Watch Tower of August 15, 1914, printed a fascinating letter addressed to Brother Russell, stating: "I am a stranger to you in one sense; but I came to a knowledge of Present Truth through your writings just twenty-two months ago. For some time I have been anxious to write and tell you of my special appreciation of the Truth, but circumstances did not permit until now.

"You will be interested in knowing that I am a Korean. When the first missionaries landed here (in 1885) Korea was a hermit kingdom. Since then some Koreans became identified with Christianity.

"For about eight years I drifted through the dangerous currents of what I now see was Spiritism—Satanic teaching. Now I thank God that He sent our beloved Brother R. R. Hollister here with the Glad Tidings and saved me out of these currents which were leading me to an unknown place.

"My senses were almost lost; it took about six months to have the eyes and ears of my understanding opened. Since then I have consecrated myself to the Lord and continue to praise Him."—Signed, P. S. Kang.

Who was P. S. Kang, and how did he learn the truth?

To an IBSA convention audience in San Francisco in 1915, Brother R. R. Hollister related how he met

Mr. Kang. "In Korea the Lord directed me to Kang Pom-shik* who was at first employed upon a purely business basis to do some translating," Hollister said. "Soon he began taking a deep personal interest in the articles he was working on, and after spending some months in our office, he professed a full consecration [dedication] to the Lord. Since then he has been much used in translating, interpreting, class leading, and managing the Korean branch. I confidently anticipate the pleasure of introducing him to you at the General Assembly as a delegate from the 'Hermit Nation.'"

MORE HELP FROM ABROAD

In 1915 Sister Fanny L. Mackenzie, a colporteur (full-time preacher) from Britain, began making periodic visits to Korea, paying her own traveling expenses. She used an IBSA letterhead to give a witness. How? By printing a message about the Kingdom in English on the front side of the letter and on the back side a translation thereof in Chinese, which could be understood by most people in the Orient.

The letter offered to leave the book *The Divine Plan of the Ages* on a trial basis. The branch records show she placed 281 books. Besides her diligence in this work of distributing literature, she also paid the equivalent of \$15 to Brother Kang for his personal expenses. In 1949, at age 91, she turned over these records to the present Branch Committee coordinator, Don Steele, before his coming to Korea.

* In Korea the family name always comes first in speaking and writing.

FIRST PRINTERY

Brother Kang, the secretary in charge of the work in Korea, and his associates continued spreading the message, but the response was slow. Nevertheless, in 1921 they held public meeting "pilgrimages" throughout the country, and the booklet *Millions Now Living Will Never Die* was published in the local language and distributed. Korea now joined the list of 18 branches of the Society outside of the United States.

Having the message printed in the Korean language outside the country created many hardships. Consequently, in 1922 Brother Rutherford sent Brother Kang \$2,000 (U.S.) to set up a small printery of up to seven machines. The presses churned out literature in the Korean, Chinese, and Japanese languages. Still, no great increase was seen during those years.

UNDER NEW MANAGEMENT

The Society established a branch in Japan in the fall of 1926 and appointed Junzo Akashi, a Japanese-American, as the representative to Japan, China, and Korea. In the meantime, Brother Kang, who had been in charge of the work in Korea, was employing the Society's printery for his own use, printing worldly books. He even had the audacity to sell the printery without permission. Brother Park Min-joon replaced him in 1927.

Brother Park, a colporteur, was a faithful brother who had made long journeys on foot up and down the peninsula to hold public meetings and place literature. He met special opposition from the

Protestant missionaries, but the local police, then Japanese because of Korea's being under Japanese rule, often came to his rescue.

Since by 1931 larger quarters were needed for the office, it was moved to Brother Park's home at 147 Key Dong in Seoul.

Brother Park knew the English language well and translated the books *Reconciliation* and *Government*, as well as others, from English into Korean. His fluency in the English language enabled him to correspond directly with the Society in New York. Apparently, however, Brother Park was not as proficient in Japanese as Akashi desired, so he was replaced in 1935. Brother Moon Tae-soon, a school-teacher, was placed in charge of the work. Brother Moon's diligence as a full-time field worker was to be tested in the future.

COLPORTEUR ACTIVITY

Brother Lee Shi-chong, at age 22, dedicated his life to Jehovah in 1930 and devoted himself to the colporteur service. "I was not courageous enough to preach in the city, so I acquired a bicycle and decided to preach in the provinces," Brother Lee tells us. "I piled my baggage and literature on my bicycle, and the first place I went was to the county office in Kyōnggi Province. I hesitated about going in, but I thought of my mission as a Kingdom ambassador, a term I had heard often from the branch manager. The result was that I placed several books with the officials, and I was very much encouraged and had confidence from then on."

Brother Lee, who is presently serving as an elder in a Seoul congregation, traveled the length and

**Lee
Shi-chong,
a colporteur
who
traveled
through
rural areas
by bicycle
in the early
1930's to
spread the
Kingdom
message**



breadth of the land, reaching into what is now North Korea and even into Manchuria. He would order literature from the Seoul office and have it sent ahead to the next village or town. This was his life for three years until 1933 when the witnessing work came under difficulty.

The records for the year 1931 show that the Kingdom proclaimers were busy. They reached 30,920 homes, spent 11,853 hours in the field, and distributed 2,753 books, 13,136 booklets, and 3,940 copies of the *Golden Age* magazine. In 1932 Korea held its first convention, from June 11 to 13 in Seoul, with 45 in attendance. In that same year 50,000 copies of the booklet *The Kingdom, the Hope of the World* were issued in Korean for free distribution. Thus, the work in Korea was expanding.

POLICE RAIDS

The militaristic government of Japan reacted sharply to this increased activity of Jehovah's people. The branch overseer in Japan gave the following report, covering both Japan and Korea:

'I left Tokyo for a trip on May 10, 1933, and received a letter by airmail at Mukden of Manchuria, on May 15th, from which I learned that all the office staff of five brethren at our branch [in Tokyo] were arrested and thrown into prison and the work in the branch was kept going by sisters. Newspapers of May 16 and 17 devoted almost whole page reports to the arrests of Jehovah's Witnesses.

'The police raided the Society's offices in Tokyo and Seoul. They seized the entire stock of our publications. You will surely be glad to know that the Japanese and Korean brethren kept their faithfulness and integrity toward Jehovah and his anointed King even during the severe testings.'

The amount of literature confiscated by the police from the Society's Seoul office on June 17, 1933, was estimated at 50,000 pieces. It was taken to the Han River in Seoul in 18 handcarts and publicly burned, reported the Seoul newspaper *Tong A Ilbo*. The article also said that on August 15, 1933, approximately 3,000 pieces of literature were seized and destroyed at the homes of the brothers near Pyongyang, now in North Korea. But did the police raids silence the witnessing work?

THE WORK GOES ON

Colporteur Lee Shi-chong, who was called back to Seoul because of the arrests, recalls: "The broth-

ers quickly recovered their courage and resumed preaching with *The Golden Age*, the only publication not banned, and, of course, we kept holding our meetings."

The Golden Age was used in the Korean field from 1933 to 1939 and was registered as a newspaper. Its price was two jeon, the equivalent of one cent (U.S.). Although the main supply of literature had been destroyed, many of the brothers still had some books and booklets of their own, and these were loaned and exchanged among the brothers so that people who were really interested could receive the message.

The meetings were held weekly on Sundays. The brother conducting would speak for an hour, and if some new ones were present, he would go over the fundamental teachings for them. The conductor would also explain a *Watchtower* article, since the others did not have a copy in which to follow along. *The Watchtower* was printed in booklet form and in Japanese. During the Japanese occupation, Koreans were forced to use the Japanese language and could therefore read, write, and speak it.

However, there were few qualified brothers in Seoul to conduct these meetings. Why was this the case? Because the branch overseer enrolled all he could in the colporteur work and then sent them to faraway territories. As a result, the experienced brothers were scattered about the peninsula and were unable to associate together. Any further improvement in the methods of conducting meetings would now have to await the arrival of Watch Tower missionaries, yet some time in the future.

INFLUENTIAL FAMILY FLEES "BABYLON"

With all Watch Tower literature except *The Golden Age* now banned, the work had to be done cautiously. Brothers had to be careful, discreet in their comings and goings. Despite there being no regular organized meetings, those who did take up the truth were courageous and determined individuals.

The Ok family are an outstanding example. They were all Seventh-Day Adventists, well educated, and economically well off and they had an outstanding reputation in the community. Ok Ji-joon's father was an elder in the church and the principal of an



Ok Ung-doo,
Ok Ryee-joon,
and
Ok Ji-joon
(left to right)
faced severe
trials during
World War II

Adventist school, and his wife Kim Bong-nyo* was the local school's auditor.

"One day in 1937," Ok Ji-joon tells us, "I happened to find a magazine, *The Golden Age*, in the trash can. Since I was very religious, I was interested in the religious articles in it and read them thoroughly. Some days later two men visited me and offered me more literature from the 'Lighthouse.' [This was the term for "Watch Tower" mistakenly translated and used by the Japanese branch overseer and hence used also in Korea.] They had me read what I later learned was a testimony card. I gladly received all the books they had. Later, on reading them I found many points that contradicted my Adventist faith. I wrote to the Tokyo address appearing on the back pages of the book and for some months kept up this doctrinal discussion by mail. The Tokyo branch would answer my questions, enclosing certain *Watchtower* magazines underlined in red at particular places.

"The Sariwon Adventist Church in Hwanghae Province, now in North Korea, made trouble for me because I kept on asking questions about this new-found truth. The minister tried to evade answering and haughtily said that asking such questions of the minister, especially one who was an intimate friend of my father, was disrespectful. But I thought personal relations should not interfere with Bible discussions and that he owed me an answer. My younger brother also recognized the truth and came along with me, as did my older brother. Finally we stopped attending church.

* Married women retain their previous family name.

"My father opposed us. When my older brother and I closed down our prosperous farming-tool factory in order to have time for the preaching work, he was furious and put us out of the house. However, we did not give up but kept trying to persuade him with the information in *The Watchtower*."

Brother Ok's older brother, Ok Ryei-joon, next tells how their father's eyes were opened to the truth.

"One day our Adventist minister visited us and told us that the intelligence section of the Police Bureau had ordered our church to attend the Japanese Shinto shrine to worship Japanese gods and to raise the Japanese flag at the church, salute the flag, and sing the national anthem before each service. The pastor's own opinion was that the Adventists would have to conform or else the church would be banned and the Adventists would disappear. The minister asked the church's headquarters about the matter, and then he visited us to tell us the answer. Their headquarters said they should obey the police order, though it would be a big trial. Our father was greatly disappointed in that decision."

Their father wanted to know the view of the Watch Tower Society on this matter. To find out, he began to study the Bible with his sons. As a result, he recognized just how right Jehovah's Witnesses were. The whole family—father, mother, four sons, and two daughters-in-law—stopped going to church.

"Later, in 1938, the Adventist Church sent an American missionary to our home, and he told us that their missionaries had decided to leave Korea because of the Japanese government's oppression,"

continues Ok Ryei-joon. "He also said that our family's withdrawal from the church on account of the flag-salute problem and the worship at Shinto shrines was very commendable and encouraged us to keep strong faith in Jehovah God, even as all of Jehovah's Witnesses in Korea do."

When the branch overseer from Japan visited, this entire family was baptized on November 19, 1937. Today, three of these brothers serve as elders. Because of his stand on the neutrality issue, their younger brother, Ok Ung-nyun, died faithful in a Japanese prison in 1939.

A TIMELY WARNING

In December 1938, during Junzo Akashi's last visit to Korea, he met with 30 brothers at Moon Tae-soon's house in Seoul and warned them that they would soon be arrested. When that happens, he cautioned, do not show disrespect to the national flag or emperor. Do not compromise either, he also said. He urged all to preach as much as possible using the three booklets available, *Protection*, *Warning*, and *Face the Facts*.

In the new booklet *Face the Facts*, Akashi dwelt on one point that would adversely influence the Korean brothers. The booklet encouraged young couples to wait a "few years," until after Armageddon, before marrying. He interpreted this to mean just two or three years, instead of an indefinite time period. Thus, the Korean brothers believed that they had just a few months left to preach, then they would suffer arrest, and while imprisoned, Armageddon would strike.

A few weeks later the newspapers began to attack the organization and referred to Brother Rutherford

as a "crazy pacifist." When Junzo Akashi's son and another Japanese brother refused military training in January 1939, Akashi himself was summoned to the Japanese army headquarters in Tokyo to explain why. Arrests of the brothers followed—in Japan on June 21, in Taiwan on June 22, and in Korea on June 29. Many Witnesses repeatedly spent time in prisons until the end of World War II in 1945.

EARLY INTEGRITY KEEPERS

Sister Chang Soon-ok, a former Catholic who learned the truth by reading *The Golden Age*, tells us what developed after that last meeting in Seoul with Junzo Akashi. "Those who heard his talk went out to their assigned territory with many books," she begins. "I went to Pusan and preached. At dawn of June 29, 1939, a policeman arrested me. Nine of us sisters were locked in the same cell with common criminals. It was hot and dirty, and it stank. We were jailed for one year before we were even brought to trial.

"In prison they forced the prisoners to worship the emperor every morning. Because we refused, they handcuffed one hand behind our back with the other hand drawn over our shoulder. Sometimes they put double handcuffs on us, and sometimes two persons were chained together, back-to-back. During that time they had to change our handcuffs to the front each time we had a meal. Finally, after seven months, they gave up and took the chains off.

"After our regular sentences were finished, four of us sisters were held in a protective custody camp in Ch'ungju as incorrigibles. One guard told the sisters that everyone in that camp was due to be executed

within a few days. Then suddenly the war ended, and we were finally released on August 16, 1945. To this day I get filled with emotion when I think about all those years in prison."

The Ok family was also among those arrested. Lee Jung-sang, the wife of the oldest brother, Ok Ryei-joon, relates their experience.

"When I was no more than a spiritual babe, baptized less than two years, the police from Seoul took my husband and his younger brother, Ok Ji-joon, off to prison," she recalls. "At that time most of the Korean brothers and sisters were arrested and eventually were put into Sodaemun prison in Seoul. The police again confiscated all the Society's publications—or so they thought!

"While we were still free, my sister-in-law, Kim Bong-nyo, and another sister, Kim Kyung-hui, and I went to the Society's storeroom and took all the literature we could carry, as it was in our mind to place as much of it as we could before we ourselves were arrested. We went north to Pyongyang, and while working there, we too were arrested in November 1939 on the grounds of disturbing the peace and distributing books that were banned. We were jailed in the Tongdaemun police station and later moved to Sodaemun prison where the other sisters were. Altogether, 38 brothers and sisters were in prison at that time."

FAITHFUL UNTO DEATH

Sister Park Ock-hi, who is presently a special pioneer at age 86 and another of those faithful ones who had been imprisoned, recalls those difficult days.

"After spending all winter in Kyōngsang Province in southern Korea preaching the good news, we came home to Seoul in February 1939," she says. "And my husband, Choi Sung-kyu, was immediately arrested by the police from the Tongdaemun police station in Seoul. The police charged him with refusing to worship at the Shinto shrine. During his 20 days in jail, he contracted typhoid fever, and they transferred him to a hospital. After 40 days in the hospital, he was released, only to be caught up in the arrests of the brothers that took place in June 1939.

"My husband's brother-in-law had a position under the Japanese government, and he sent a lawyer to effect his release from prison. The lawyer told my husband that the only way he could arrange his release was for him to worship at the Shinto shrine. My husband rejected his offer on the spot and told him never to come to see him again. My husband then wrote me asking, 'Who sent the lawyer? Keep awake! Read Romans 8:35-39.' This letter greatly encouraged all of us on the outside, and the new ones were determined to continue to praise Jehovah.

"Later, in September 1941, I was arrested again but held for only 15 days. I was told that since my husband was being released from prison, I should bring 500 won (\$250, U.S.). I borrowed the money and went to the prison. It was a dark, cold night. I found my husband lying on the ground, covered with a white sheet, more dead than alive. They had imprisoned him for two and a half years and now demanded 500 won to release him in this condition! My husband, at age 42, died eight hours later.

"I was arrested for the fourth time in September 1942 and this time ended up in Sodaemun prison

*Choi Sung-kyu
suffered
severely unto
death in 1941
because of his
beliefs, but
his faith was
a great
encouragement
to his brothers*



in Seoul along with other imprisoned sisters. There we had to endure indescribable torture."

The female guard would get angry with these sisters for not worshipping the Japanese emperor. It created extra work for her. For each meal she had to change their handcuffs and chains. But obviously she noticed the faithfulness of these dear sisters. Amazingly, over 20 years later she began to study the Bible, was reunited with these sisters at a district convention, and was baptized in 1970.

The brothers were interrogated time and again as the authorities sought ways to prosecute them. They were asked: "Is it true that all nations are under the influence of the Devil? Is our great Imperial Japan included? Are you an American spy? When will Armageddon come?" The brothers answered the last question by saying: "After the preaching work is

done." Next the authorities would charge: "By your preaching you are actually urging Armageddon's coming, which means you are urging our Imperial Japan's destruction. So you are violating the law of public order." Many of the brothers were then arrested and thrown into prison for two to four years.

Five of the 38 imprisoned died faithful while in prison, including Moon Tae-soon, who had been taking care of the work under the Japan branch overseer.

AFTER WORLD WAR II, DISILLUSIONMENT

Junzo Akashi was responsible for the work in Korea from the time it was placed under the Japan branch in 1926. After their release in 1945, the brothers looked to him for direction. However, Akashi, who had been leading an immoral life and had compromised the truth under pressure, had left God's organization.

The Korean brothers were disturbed, though, because they had believed his inaccurate explanation of the "few years" left before Armageddon. That small group of brothers became divided. Some, strong in faith, believed they should continue to preach; others lost their zeal.

For several years after 1939, there was no contact with Jehovah's organization. The brothers felt abandoned. Many of them believed that what they were experiencing in Korea was happening to the entire organization around the world. They had no information that the Watch Tower Society was still operating, let alone that their brothers in other countries had held fast to their integrity during World War II or that increases were beginning to take place. With

no one to take the lead and no contact with the organization, true worship in Korea slowed down almost to a complete stop.

"JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES HAVE COME ALIVE AGAIN"

How did the door to true worship swing open again? Sister Park Ock-hi explains:

"After liberation from the Japanese in 1945, although several sisters insisted it was time to wait for Armageddon in a 'secret place,' we did continue to hold some meetings in my house. These were not organized meetings; rather, the brother conducting would preach to us from the older publications available. This was the extent of our activity for the next few years. One of those in attendance was my nephew, Park Chong-il, a young lad of 15 years who later would become a member of the Branch Committee in Korea.

"Then, to our surprise, one day in August 1948, Brother Choi Young-won showed us an article in the American Army newspaper, *Stars and Stripes*. It stated that Jehovah's Witnesses were very active in the United States and elsewhere. We were delighted. We all encouraged Brother Choi to write to the Society in the United States. He did, and the Society responded immediately, sending us a parcel of literature. We joyfully filled our book bags with these booklets and went right into the house-to-house work in Seoul. We had a wonderful time! One woman even remarked, 'Jehovah's Witnesses have come alive again.'"

Twelve individuals comprised the first congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses on June 24, 1949.

"WELCOME, WATCH TOWER ENVOY OF HOPE"

It was not until the first of a long line of faithful missionaries arrived, numbering eventually 52 in all, that there was really a solid link with the Society's headquarters.

After the Seoul Congregation was enrolled by the Society, arrangements were made to send trained missionaries into the country from the Watchtower Bible School of Gilead. Although initially assigned to Japan, eight graduates of the 11th class of Gilead had their assignments changed to Korea. Don and Earlene Steele* were selected to go first. After reams of paperwork, visas were granted by the Republic of Korea and on August 9, 1949, they arrived in Korea.

Because of security measures at Kimpo Airport, only two brothers waited to greet the Steeles. On a fence near the runway, they strung up a banner that read, "Welcome, Watch Tower Envoy of Hope." Neither of these brothers knew any English, but their warm smiles and friendly handshakes were everything the Steeles needed.

After the Steeles were put up in a small hotel, about ten brothers gathered with the congregation servant, Choi Young-won, who spoke English. This was the first contact in ten years with anyone representing the organization. Now the brothers could get their burning questions answered about the remaining work. So a meeting was arranged for the following evening. In his first letter to the Society, dated August 12, 1949, Brother Steele reported:

* After 36 years of faithful missionary service in Korea, Earlene Steele died in 1985, following an extended illness.



Missionaries and branch family in front of enlarged branch at Seoul. Addition on right was dedicated in 1975

"To our amazement, forty brethren and people of good will attended. We conveyed the greetings of the brethren in the United States, talked of God's organization at this time and then answered many of their questions. The brethren in many respects have a deep understanding and are certainly anxious to do what is to be done. Only two or three have wrong ideas, being bitter because the 'few years' till Armageddon mentioned in the *Face the Facts* booklet has stretched out this long."

With Seoul's population then at 1,500,000, two times greater than before World War II, finding a house for the missionaries was like looking for the proverbial needle in a haystack. But by the end of August a fine piece of property was acquired near the center of the city. It was a well-built,

Western-type brick building previously controlled by the Japanese government but now held in trust by the Korean government. The house had four bedrooms, a large living room, a dining room, and a kitchen. Now the Society could send the other six missionaries. This property not only served as a missionary home and meeting place for the Korean congregation but would in due time also serve as the branch office.

ORGANIZED MINISTRY BEGINS

With the little stock of literature available and only a few parcels coming by mail, for the next few months the 2 missionaries and 28 local brothers would lend the booklets to interested ones found in the house-to-house work and then return to pick up the literature and reuse it with others.

On January 1, 1950, four publishers who were desirous of taking up full-time service were appointed as pioneers. By February one fourth of the congregation were pioneers, seven in all, and the remaining publishers were averaging 33 hours a month. The return visit work and the home Bible study work, something they had not known before, just delighted them.

The first full month of activity for the missionaries ended with a count of 16 Bible studies. The students would come to the missionary home rather than study in their own humble homes. The problem was not in getting studies but, rather, in finding persons who were genuinely interested in the Kingdom message and not just in learning English or in associating with foreigners.

Since the missionaries were eager to have litera-

**Earlene and
Don Steele,
first
Watch Tower
missionaries
in Korea,
August 1949**



ture in the Korean language for use in the field, the Society instructed that the "*Let God Be True*" book be translated and published as soon as possible. Brother Choi was the only one capable of translation. However, his secular work kept him so busy that it was difficult even to keep up with translating *The Watchtower* for the weekly study. To lighten his load, two individuals studying with the missionaries, one an English professor and the other a bank official, were asked to assist with this work. Surprisingly, considering their limited knowledge of the truth and the organization, the translation came out well.

ORGANIZED MEETINGS STIMULATE BROTHERS

It was only after the missionaries' arrival that an organized *Watchtower* Study began. After

Brother Choi translated the lesson, then Brother Park Chong-il would hand-copy the whole lesson through nine sheets of onionskin paper and carbons. With 47 in attendance at that first *Watchtower* Study on August 14, 1949, many had to crowd around each onionskin copy to share in the meeting. Next came the first Service Meeting ever to be held in Korea.

Brother Shin Wan, who now began to reassociate with the congregation, operated a small mimeograph shop that was put to good Kingdom use. After the translation of the *Watchtower* lesson was made, the copy was put on a wax stencil, and the material was reproduced by the hand-roller method, providing individual copies for all in attendance at the meetings. No more handmade copies!

OTHER MISSIONARIES ARRIVE

All in the congregation eagerly awaited the arrival of the remaining missionaries. On March 12, 1950, Winfield (Scott) and Alice Counts, Grace and Gladys Gregory, Norrine Miller (now Thompson), and Florence Manso (now Janczyn) were welcomed to their new assignment with a Korean feast and warm traditional hospitality.

The new missionaries had no previous training in the language before arriving in Korea, but by May 1950 the eight missionaries had an average of 20 Bible studies each. For their talks to the congregation, interpreters were used, but the interpreters, lacking proficiency in English, were sometimes less than accurate. For example, when one missionary was encouraging the brothers in the service, the interpreter used the term "*military* service."

After the first Theocratic Ministry School was organized, public meetings were also started in the spring of 1950. So many were attending, up to 162 now, that arrangements were made for a series of public talks to be held in the Chae Dong Primary School auditorium. Remarkably, the first talk, "The Destiny of Our Earth," took place peacefully on June 25, 1950—the fateful day the Korean War began.

Brother Steele later reported: "As I finished my public lecture in a school auditorium in Seoul, June 25, the police notified us that South Korea had been attacked and a curfew was imposed. Incidentally, interest in the Theocracy had so increased there were 336 attending this last public lecture! The following night the South Korean defenses collapsed and Seoul was brought under siege."

THE KOREAN WAR

By July 1949 all the occupation forces of both the United States and the Soviet Union had been withdrawn, each leaving some men in advisory capacities. The peninsula was about to suffer one of the most destructive wars of modern times. In June 1950 when combat broke out, the South Korean army had fewer than a hundred thousand men, equipped with only small arms. The North Korean forces, however, stood at about 135,000, including a tank brigade. Hence, the North had the advantage of training and equipment, while the South was unprepared to ward off the invasion.

On June 28 the capital city of Seoul fell to the North Korean forces, who overwhelmed the South Korean army. The battle would seesaw across the

38th parallel until an armistice was signed on July 27, 1953.

MISSIONARIES EVACUATED

The second day after the war began, the American Forces Korea Network announced that all Americans were ordered to evacuate the country. The missionaries now faced a dilemma. Should they stay and work with these faithful Korean brothers or leave? The eight missionaries met, asked Jehovah's guidance, and discussed the tense situation. To remain meant capture and imprisonment for certain. It was unanimous—they should leave. Developments that followed showed they made the right decision.

A report from the missionaries later stated: 'We had only 30 minutes to catch the last convoy leaving the city. Personal and household belongings were turned over to the local congregation servant. The city at the moment was under bombardment, and in the wild dash to Kimpo Airport our buses were strafed. Flown to Japan, all eight of us are at present working in Kobe.'

The congregation servant in Seoul, Brother Lee Shi-chong, also wrote that the few foreigners who stayed behind had all been taken on a "death march."

Thus, all too soon, the eight missionaries abruptly ended their assignment in Korea, the Steeles being there just over ten months and the other six being there just over three months. But during that brief time, they had grown to love dearly their zealous Korean brothers. Once again the Korean organization would be without any direct contact with the

Society. Carrying on the ministry and maintaining Christian neutrality in these new circumstances now confronted each Korean Witness individually.

FAITHFUL DESPITE HARDSHIPS

With 43 percent of Korea's industrial facilities smashed and 33 percent of its homes destroyed, much of the population, including the brothers, now lived as refugees. Homes were devastated, personal property gone. Constant alertness meant life. Several of the brothers died, caught by the strafing from aircraft of either army. A few, including those who took refuge in the Society's property, were shot to death in cold blood by the soldiers. However, the survivors never quit their commission to preach the Kingdom as the hope of the world. They never stopped sowing the seeds of truth.

In the first few days of the war, most of Seoul's population was trapped in the city. The brothers knew they would be forced into the People's Volunteer Army if they did not flee south. Brother Park Chong-il and Ok Ung-suk hid in the city until July 5 and then slipped across the Han River in an effort to reach a "safe" area south of Seoul. They passed scores of dead bodies, disabled tanks, and devastated buildings along their escape route, but the closer they got to the battle lines, the harder it was to keep out of sight of the North Korean soldiers.

As a result of U.S. General MacArthur's Inchon landing on September 15, 1950, the city of Seoul was freed from North Korean rule, until the war pendulum would once again swing the other way. Brother Park returned to Seoul on October 1, 1950,

and decided to go from house to house, interested in what the people's response would be. He found them tense and afraid.

Although not yet baptized, Roh Pyung-il also faced problems just before the war. He was the son-in-law of Sister Kim Chu-ok, who had proved her faithfulness in prison during the Japanese occupation. During the first North Korean occupation of Seoul, he fled to the mountains to escape being forced into their army. However, the soldiers spotted smoke from his cooking fire, and he was thereupon seized. Taken to the edge of the city, he was put with a number of other young men who had been rounded up. They were questioned, one by one. Those who were unable to satisfy their interrogators were taken aside and shot. Roh thought he would be killed no matter what he said and so was determined to give a witness before that happened.

He was asked why he was avoiding the People's Volunteer Army. "I can serve only God's Kingdom," he replied. "At Armageddon both sides in this political struggle will be destroyed by God, and I do not wish to be on either side. I cannot violate God's law for any man-made law contrary to his. I am not afraid to die because I believe in the resurrection."

His interrogator said that he was the first one who spoke the truth, but he should step aside anyway. The soldiers raised their rifles, aimed, and fired, purposely missing him. Roh fainted, only to awake shortly thereafter, surprised to be alive. His first words were: "The truth certainly is powerful!"

REFUGEES AGAIN

After two and a half months under South Korean rule, on December 24, 1950, the South Korean government ordered all Seoul's inhabitants, except those of draft age, to evacuate the city once again.

Just 11 days later, January 4, 1951, the North Korean and Chinese soldiers reoccupied the city. Before that, though, the brothers grabbed what belongings they could carry on foot or in carts and began life as refugees again. They also took with them several cartons of the booklet *The Joy of All the People* that they found left in the missionary home. These were used to plant seeds of truth during this second refugee period.

The young brothers, of course, could not escape the city. Although their neutral Christian stand presented problems, it often proved to be lifesaving, as Brother Park Chong-il soon found out. After the North Korean army entered the city again, he and Cho Young-ha, a high-school teacher and a Methodist who was interested in the truth, lived quietly in a sister's house for three and a half months.

Brother Park and his companion were in their hideaway for only a few days when the North Korean secret police came knocking on their door. The police suspected they were either spies or soldiers of the South Korean army. A police investigator examined their hands to see if they had been handling guns.

"We are Christians who cannot participate in war and so could not evacuate the city, as we would have been caught by the other side," they told the investigator. The police ordered them not to leave the

house and threatened to return the next day. As soon as the police left, Brother Park and Cho Young-ha quickly destroyed all names, addresses, and pictures of the Witnesses they had and then determined to witness to the police the next day, even though they knew that they might be imprisoned.

The next morning the policeman came again with a different investigator. Brother Park witnessed for about an hour and a half, as though giving a public talk. The men listened without interrupting and appeared interested in his message. Then, after a few questions, they abruptly left. Two days later one of them came back with still a different investigator, and Brother Park and his friend had another opportunity to give a witness. No police ever came again. They were careful, though, not to leave the house. Cho's faith was greatly strengthened, and he came right into the truth.

The war now swung in the other direction, and by March 31, 1951, the UN forces had again reached north to the 38th parallel. Seoul once more was under UN command. Park Chong-il was now free to leave the house. He started across the city to check on the missionary home but was stopped by the UN forces. The South Korean soldiers, who were with the UN forces, became suspicious of him. And no wonder! After being indoors for more than three months, his face was pale and his hair long. Since he knew some English, Brother Park told the American soldiers that he was one of Jehovah's Witnesses and had associated with American Watch Tower missionaries and was going to check on the missionaries' property. The soldiers believed him and let him go.

WORK FORGES AHEAD DESPITE REFUGEE CONDITION

The brothers, now refugees, settled primarily in five major cities—Taejon, Taegu, Pusan, Chonju, and Kunsan. The populations of these cities swelled to several times their normal size as people clung to any shelter—lean-tos, hillsides, caves—they could find.

Sister Kim Chi-duk, now 87 and still a pioneer, was among the first Witnesses to arrive in Taegu. Two of her sons had been killed during the war. Now, with two of her other children, she immediately began witnessing. In no time she placed all the literature she brought with her and then used the second week to make return visits.

Another refugee in Taegu, Brother Lee In-won, along with Sister Kim, held meetings with yet dozens of others. Mimeograph chapters of the books *"Let God Be True"* and *"This Means Everlasting Life"* were used for their meetings and in field service. The first congregation organized under refugee conditions was in this city of Taegu.

Brother Ok Ryei-joon and his wife, Lee Jung-sang, refugees from North Korea, relocated in Chonju. Sister Lee tells us what happened next:

"I started a Bible study with four women deacons from the Central Presbyterian Church. They did not want to use the Society's publications, only the Bible. The clergy there considered us contemptible refugees and tried to stop us from preaching, even sending a mob out after me. These four women helped me escape the mob. Despite these efforts against me by the clergy, the women continued their Bible study. As a result, eventually 20 persons came out of that church and into the truth."

MISSIONARY HELP RETURNS

Under continuing wartime conditions, entry into Korea was all but impossible. However, after much red tape had been unraveled, Don Steele was able to return, alone, and arrived at Pusan harbor on November 11, 1951. McArthur's Headquarters then limited one person to each mission, and no women were permitted entry. It would be another year before Don's wife, Earlene, could join him.

On November 17, 1951, Brother Steele was given permission by the U.S. Army to visit Seoul. He tells us what he and others found:

"That afternoon we walked through the city of Seoul to the missionary home. Almost all the big buildings were nothing but shells. The city was as quiet as the country. The only traffic was military. In the distance I could see the missionary home. The buildings all around it were completely demolished, but the missionary home was still standing. It had been hit by a shell in one corner, though, leaving a two-foot hole in the brick wall. All windows had been blown out, ceiling plaster was down, most of the doors had been torn off, and the wiring had been removed."

The same evening about 35 Witnesses, mostly sisters, met to hear Brother Steele's service talk, and arrangements were made for field service for the following days. The next morning 18 persons showed up for group witnessing. Before the week of his visit was over, 24 publishers reported field service time. Those stalwart sisters who remained in Seoul throughout the war were now reaping the fruitage of their hard labor.

The new publishers desired to be baptized—but where? The only facilities available were bathhouses now used exclusively by the UN soldiers. Arrangements were made to baptize the new ones at the bathhouses before the UN personnel arrived for the day. So, on Saturday, December 29, 1951, before 8:00 a.m., 27 new ones were baptized, including the sister of the former queen of Korea.

Pusan was the provisional capital of the country, and it was the practical place from which to serve the brothers throughout the country. A new mimeograph machine was ordered and received through the American Military Post Office. Surprisingly, the brothers were able to get, too, one of the first typewriters with Korean characters. Another big step forward for the Witnesses in Korea!

In December 1951 and January 1952, Brother Steele was able to visit all the places where congregations and groups had been established. Imagine, before the war there was a total of only 61 publishers in the one congregation in Seoul. By the end of the 1952 service year, there was a peak of 192 publishers in five congregations and this in spite of wartime conditions and the greater number of brothers living in a refugee state.

During this time the Society also sponsored a clothing drive. Two tons of clothing and shoes arrived from the United States.

AT LAST! THE WATCHTOWER IN PRINTED FORM

September 1952 was a big month for the Witnesses—the *Watchtower* magazine was registered with the government, and a permit for publication was issued. At first, mimeographed copies were

handwritten, but after February 1953 they were typewritten. The first editions of 16 pages numbered only about 700 copies each.

The January 1, 1954, issue of *The Watchtower* marked the start of printed magazines. The first printing was 2,000 copies, and then with the January 1955 issue it was increased to 20 pages and 5,000 copies. It was a monthly magazine printed by a commercial firm in Seoul. However, it became a semimonthly magazine in 1961 and grew to 24 pages with the January 1967 issue.

In order to be a legally recognized religion in the country, it became necessary for the Witnesses to form a corporation. *The Watch Tower Songso Chaekja Hyuphoi of Korea* was thus formed and registered with the Ministry of Education on October 30, 1952, with six directors and nine members. On February 25, 1969, by government regulation, this registry was transferred to the Ministry of Culture and Information and is the legal entity used to this day. Now, as a legal corporation, it was possible to purchase the property that the missionaries had used before the war.

BRANCH ESTABLISHED

"Things have been going so well in Korea, it is almost too good to be true," stated the Society's letter of October 18, 1952, addressed to the Korean brothers. And then on July 27, 1953, an uneasy armistice was signed, and a demilitarized zone was marked between North and South Korea. To this day no communication exists between the two Koreas or between family members separated by the demilitarized zone.

By the end of the following month, Don and

Earlene Steele had returned to Pusan after attendance at the New York convention. They delighted to see the 1953 service year in Korea close with 417 publishers in 7 congregations. The Society thus directed that from September 1, 1953, the organization in Korea would cease to be under the U.S. branch and would become the Korea branch. Don Steele would be the branch servant; today he is the Branch Committee coordinator.

The Korea branch moved into the same home in Seoul used by the missionaries before the war. Only the most necessary repairs to the building were done. Water still had to be carried in, and there was little electricity to use. The missionaries chose the second floor, and the local congregation used the first floor for their meetings.

HELP FROM AN UNEXPECTED SOURCE

Down through the years some of the thousands of U.S. military men who have served in Korea not only have shown interest in the truth but have progressed spiritually. After returning to the United States and making necessary changes in their lives, they have become active Witnesses.

Sergeant First Class Norbert Matz of the U.S. Army was an outstanding example. He desired a proper relationship with God. So he began studying the Bible with the Witnesses while stationed in the United States. He advanced quickly, so much so that when the army transferred him to Korea, he was actually able to conduct studies with Koreans. He also assisted the brothers with the Theocratic Ministry School. How? There was no Theocratic Ministry School textbook in the Korean language, so he would help them understand the material for the

school through an interpreter. He also helped arrange a group baptism on June 30, 1953, and used military vehicles for transport to the baptismal site—52 were immersed. He proved to be a great help during the time the missionaries were unable to be in Seoul. Today, as Brother Matz, he serves as an elder in a congregation in the United States.

One Bible student of Norbert Matz was a young Korean army medic, Chun Young-soon. He was baptized in 1953 and shortly thereafter began his career in full-time service. As a Gilead graduate, he became a traveling overseer and the Bethel Home overseer and presently serves on the Branch Committee. In that same year of 1953, Park Chong-il faced the issue of military service for a second time. Again he set an example of Christian neutrality for these brothers, as well as others, to follow.

FIRST LARGE CONVENTION

With martial law having finally been lifted during the fall of 1953, it was now possible for Korea to have a district convention—August 6-8, 1954. Chae Dong Primary School was the site. For the first time, brothers from all over the country assembled. The estimated attendance had been set at 700, but 1,043 were on hand the first day, growing to 1,245 for the Public Meeting on Sunday. Many, remembering the dark days of World War II followed by the horrors of the Korean War, had eyes filled with tears of joy. They thought they would never see the day when so many people would be gathered to Jehovah's side.

Outstanding at this convention was the first mass baptism. A sister's husband who was an official in the fire department arranged to have the pool at the school filled with water after the brothers cleaned

out the debris left in it from the war. That day, to the happy amazement of all, 284, or 23 percent of all who attended, were immersed. It now became evident that the branch would have a great work ahead to help all these new ones to progress spiritually.

GILEAD SENDS MORE HELP

In March 1955 the second wave of missionaries arrived in Korea—Milton and Liz Hamilton, Keith and Evelyn Kennedy, Karl Emerson, Norris Peters, Elaine Scheidt (now Ness), and Druzilla (Dru) Craig (now Youngberg). A large group of brothers met them at Yoido Airport. Back then the airport was on an isle of sand in the Han River that today is a city within a city. Although none of the new missionaries knew the language, smiles, tears of joy, and gestures said it all. Now the branch office would again be bustling with workers, since it was a combination of branch office and missionary home.

One month after the missionaries arrived, Korea's first circuit assembly was held in April 1955. What an exciting and new experience this was for the friends! The missionaries even had parts on the program but spoke through interpreters.

PUSAN'S MISSIONARY HOME

In the fall of 1955 a missionary home was opened in the port city of Pusan, about 200 air miles south of Seoul. Pusan then had a population of about 1,100,000 and only one congregation of Witnesses. The Hamiltons, Evalyn Myung Hae Park (now Emerson), and one Korean sister set up the home.

Because of the large refugee population,

accommodations in the city were at a premium, but a small place was located. It was on the second floor and had two rooms for bedrooms plus one small room for the dining room, and the hallway served as the kitchen. There was no running water and little electricity available, which made cooking, cleaning, and washing tedious chores. To make the water potable, it had to be boiled or chlorinated.

"The brothers did not have much in those days, but they were warm and friendly and had a zeal for the field service," says Brother Hamilton.

A total of 17 missionaries have served in Pusan city, and today there are 51 congregations amidst a population of 3,500,000. The brothers there always considered it a privilege to have had a missionary home in their city.

A MILESTONE VISIT

The momentous time was here—the first official visitor from world headquarters since Brother Hollister's day. Brother Nathan H. Knorr, then the president of the Watch Tower Society, set foot on Korean soil April 27, 1956, at Yoido Airport, where 500 of the 1,500 publishers welcomed him. Accompanying Brother Knorr were Don Adams from the Brooklyn office and Lloyd Barry (now of the Governing Body), who was being trained for zone work in the Orient.

Brother Knorr's six-day visit set a milestone in Korean theocratic history. His first talk to the 1,330 assembled for the national convention reassured them that they were truly part of Jehovah's worldwide organization. At this convention 303 were baptized in the chilly spring waters of the Han River.



Brothers and sisters welcome Nathan H. Knorr, then president of the Watch Tower Society, after his plane touched down on April 27, 1956, at Yoido Airport, Korea. Accompanying him were Don Adams and Lloyd Barry

Indicating prospects for the future, a crowd of 3,473 gathered in Seoul Stadium for the public talk "Making All Mankind One Under Their Creator."

Brother Knorr saw that now the important work in Korea was to help these new ones to advance spiritually. He laid the main responsibility for this on the shoulders of the branch members and missionaries. He also recognized that some were getting baptized too soon, without sufficient knowledge of the Scriptures. As a result, some had fallen by the wayside. So he instructed the branch members that baptisms were to be held only at circuit assemblies or

larger conventions. This helped. Interested persons now studied and associated longer before baptism, which prepared them to fulfill their future responsibilities as Witnesses.

BOON TO BIBLE EDUCATION

The Bible study work took on new dimensions in 1956 with the release of the complete Korean edition of the book *"Let God Be True."* To Koreans, education is one of the more important things in life, attested to by the fact that the illiteracy rate today is a mere 8 percent. The branch has never had to sponsor classes in reading and writing. This, of course, is a boon to educating people in the Bible, and the publishers have a gift for that.

Interesting also is the religious makeup of people in the country. Just about 20 percent of Korea's 42,000,000 inhabitants are Buddhist, another 20 percent profess Christianity, and the remainder follow no particular belief. However, Shamanism is still very much in existence throughout the country, and Confucianism dominates the attitudes and values of the majority. The publishers have been alert to offer Bible education to all those religiously confused. The results? Remarkable!

The year 1956 saw 12 appointed to the special pioneer work in addition to the 11 missionaries already in the field. To this day this special pioneer force, now numbering about 400, continues to bear excellent fruitage. In times past the greater increases came from the city populations. But now with modern communication and transportation, the very smallest villages and towns where special pioneers are sent are showing fine results.

A FAMILY OF ZEALOUS WORKERS

Brother Park Young-shin, a circuit overseer, relates how his family took up true worship because of the efforts of special pioneers and the *"Let God Be True"* book. It started in the city of Sunch'ŏn, in the province of Chŏlla in southern Korea.

"At the time there were three special pioneers in the city, and while my mother was visiting the neighbors, she accepted the *Watchtower* magazine from one of them," he begins. "My older sister and I told my mother not to accept such, as the Witnesses were ignorant heretics. However, my mother insisted that they seemed like nice people who used the Bible. At that moment, two Witness women visited us. I asked what the difference was between them and Protestants. I thought their explanation was reasonable, and I accepted the book *"Let God Be True"* and agreed to study the Bible with them, not to become one of them, but to increase my Bible knowledge.

"It did not take much time to see I had been taught false doctrine. It weighed on my conscience, and I finally decided to resign from the church. When I told the pastor, he said: 'Why Jehovah's Witnesses? If you had to change, you could have gone to the Methodist or the Holiness Church. You have chosen the wrong religion.'

"In October 1957 my mother, my older sister, and I were baptized, followed later by my father and other siblings—in all, seven children. My mother at age 73 is a regular pioneer, while my older sister has been in the special pioneer work since 1967 and has helped some 60 persons to dedication and baptism. My two older brothers are traveling overseers."



In January 1957 during a convention held in Seoul, Frederick W. Franz, now president of the Watch Tower Society, responds to the delegates' welcome with a medley of Kingdom songs on his harmonica

Another national convention was arranged for January 1957 because of the first of several visits by Brother Frederick W. Franz, now president of the Society. No sooner had he emerged from the airplane than the brothers rushed him straight to the convention hall, where he surprised the audience by saying he was sorry it took him 63 years to get there. He then favored them by playing some Kingdom songs on his harmonica.

In the few days after the convention, wherever Brother Franz went, the brothers would follow, filled with Bible questions that just had to come out. On one of those days, a dinner was arranged for one o'clock in the afternoon. After everyone had enjoyed the tasty Korean meal, the brothers began their Bible questions and kept Brother Franz busy answering these until six o'clock that evening.

Brother Franz did not tire out, but one of his translators did and a second one had to be used.

1958 DIVINE WILL INTERNATIONAL ASSEMBLY

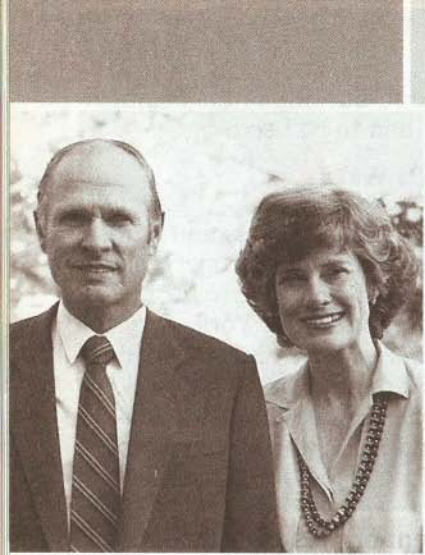
When 2 more missionaries, Bradley Ness and Bill Phillips, arrived and could look after the property in Seoul, the 11 other missionaries were able to attend the international convention in New York City. In addition, 14 Korean representatives attended there. Following the convention, two brothers, Park Chong-il, who had become the first resident translator at the branch in 1956, and Kim Jang-soo and two sisters, Kim Kyung-hi and Lee Hae-young, were selected to attend Gilead.

Korea's Divine Will convention was in October. It was held in an open-air stadium, where 2,800 delegates braved cool fall weather to attend on Sunday, and 153 were baptized.

EXPANSION IN CIRCUIT WORK

The branch has met the constant need for qualified traveling overseers in part by assigning Gilead-trained brothers to the circuit or district work. These included Norris Peters and Karl Emerson, who came to Korea in 1955. At first, as they visited the congregations, interpreters were needed until they became fluent in the language. Brother Chae Soo-wan, overseer in the Service Department and member of the Branch Committee, was an officer in the Korean army when he started studying. In 1957 he was appointed circuit overseer and he attended Gilead in 1962.

By the end of the 1958 service year, there was a peak of 2,724 publishers in the 54 congregations



Durand and Rachel Norbom and Liz and Milton Hamilton (left to right), two missionary couples who have been in Korea for more than 20 and 33 years, respectively

and many isolated groups making up the five circuits. With this increase in the field, more qualified brothers had to be found and added to those in the traveling work. Ok Ryei-joon and his wife were assigned to circuit work, as were Milton and Liz Hamilton, the first missionary couple to enter the traveling work in Korea.

For the Hamiltons this meant living with the local people and being immersed in their ways of life as contrasted with life in the missionary home. As foreigners, they had to learn the daily routine of eating and sleeping on the floor in addition to sitting on the floor while at Kingdom Hall meetings. At the time running water was scarce, and plumbing was nonexistent. Yet, it was all part of the missionary work. Today, Brother Hamilton serves on the Branch Committee and is the factory overseer.



Missionaries serving in the traveling overseer work. Left to right: Susan and John Wentworth, Geline Jumud, Josef Breiffuss, and Perry Jumud

Brother Park Ii-kyun began full-time service in 1956 and accompanied one of the missionaries in the circuit work as an interpreter. After Gilead training, he was reassigned to the branch office and now serves as a member of the Branch Committee.

After Jerry and Barbara Tylich arrived in Korea in 1966, they were assigned to a Seoul congregation and thereafter served in a circuit. Joining them in the circuit work in 1967 were Jim Tylich, Merlin Stoin, and Durand and Rachel Norbom. The Norboms are now members of the Kongdo Bethel family. Rachel remembers some of the questions she was asked when visiting congregations.

"Even as late as the early 1970's a Western woman appearing in the countryside was a novelty, and one had to get used to some very personal questions," she explains. "'How old are you?' 'Are you married?' 'How many children do you have?' and then, 'Why don't you have any?'" In one place a rumor spread that an American couple came to take some children to the States for adoption, and so several women came to offer their children to be taken to what they thought would be a more prosperous life."

Others also serving today in the traveling work amid Korea's 43 circuits are Joseph Breitfuss (from Austria), Perry and Geline Jumud (from the Philippines), and John and Susan Wentworth (from the United States), all missionaries for the past 14 to 17 years.

CLOSE CALLS DURING RIOTS

The airplane carrying Brother Milton Henschel touched down at Kimpo International Airport on April 13, 1960. His zone visit to the branch coincided with a four-day convention that opened with 2,385 in attendance.

While the Peace-Pursuing Assembly was being held, the Korean government was trying to hold the reins on bloody riots by thousands of students. Melees broke out just up the street from the convention grounds. The convention attendance, happily, grew to over 4,000—the peak for a Public Meeting—packing out every nook and cranny of the Samil Dang auditorium.

Monday evening, the day after the convention, Brother Henschel presided at the wedding of a missionary couple, Bradley Ness and Elaine Scheidt.



Kim (Phillips) Kyung-hi, Evalyn Park (Emerson), and Liz and Milton Hamilton set up missionary home in Pusan, 1955

Keith and Evelyn Kennedy, Karl Emerson, Druzilla Craig (Youngberg), Elaine Scheidt (Ness), Norris Peters, and Earlene and Don Steele on steps of shrapnel-scarred branch and missionary home in Seoul, 1957



However, getting from the wedding site to a restaurant proved to be dangerous. Brother Henschel and several missionaries exited from the wedding place into a narrow lane. Suddenly, they were trapped between thousands of rioting students charging down one end of the street and truckloads of armed police bearing down from the other end. Brother Henschel and his associates darted across the street and into the restaurant just moments before the two sides clashed. How they escaped is amazing! Once inside the restaurant, though, peace and quiet held sway.

When five more Gilead graduates were assigned to Korea, their visa applications were denied by the Korean government, as opposers had accused the Witnesses of being revolutionaries. Don Steele was able to set up an interview with U.S. Ambassador Walter McConaughy on April 6, 1960.

The ambassador told Brother Steele that it was irony of the worst sort to accuse Jehovah's Witnesses of being revolutionaries. He had served in an East European country and knew just how the Witnesses had been persecuted in East Germany. But he also pointed out that since Korea is a sovereign country, it has a right to grant visas to whom it wishes. However, he would try to arrange an interview for Brother Steele with the foreign minister. This was arranged for Tuesday, April 19, 1960. Since Brother Henschel, who is a director of the Society in the United States, was still in Korea, he could also speak to the minister.

Conditions in the country were deteriorating; the government could not quell the rioting. Tuesday arrived. The brothers were to meet the foreign minister downtown, which was the scene of the most intense rioting. Undaunted and not wanting to break the appointment, the brothers made their way to the Ministry.

They found the building tightly closed, with steel shutters down and sandbags all around as the occupants of the building barricaded themselves against the attack of the students. Obviously there would be no interview that day, and Brothers Henschel and Steele ran back home through side streets just as quickly as they could, sidestepping casualties along the way.

Some days later, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs notified the branch that the "cause" of the rejections "had been removed" and the visas would be granted. In June of that year, Russell and Dottie MacPhee, Delauris Webb (now Peters), Audrey Wendell (now Holmes), and Lois Dyke (now Ren-

ter) arrived to take up the missionary service. Another missionary home was set up in Kwangju.

TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS

The government of Syngman Rhee fell in the spring of 1960. Some months later, a duly elected government took control, only to be overthrown by a military coup in May 1961. Once again martial law clamped down on the whole country. Thus, even large religious meetings were banned until the new authorities had the situation under control. However, attendance at the congregation meetings suffered no decrease under these conditions.

When the restrictions were lifted, all religious organizations had to reregister with the new authorities. This was a delicate matter resulting in considerable paperwork. In due course the *Watch Tower Songso Chaekja Hyuphoi of Korea* was registered again with the Ministry of Education on November 25, 1961.

"EVERLASTING GOOD NEWS" ASSEMBLIES

Joy abounded when it was announced that Korea would host one of the "Everlasting Good News" Assemblies in 1963. Korea then was a developing country. Although today a million or more tourists come to Korea each year, at that time this was one of the largest tourist groups ever to visit Korea—more than 400 persons from 19 countries. Thus, every Korean Witness was interested in the arrival of the brothers from abroad.

The first plane, with 94 foreign convention delegates, arrived the morning of August 24, 1963, with Brother and Sister Knorr on board. The chief

protocol officer of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was on hand to welcome Brother Knorr and his wife, who were then taken ahead by private car. But soon a convoy of busloads of the other delegates, escorted by special courtesy police, overtook the private car and left it far behind.

The baptism of 612 was the largest to date. Announcement that the Korean *Awake!* would now be semimonthly brought joy to all in attendance because since its first Korean issue of September 8, 1959, *Awake!* had been a monthly magazine. Attendance for the public lecture grew to 8,975, three thousand of whom were interested persons! Not to be overlooked, however, was the 12-percent increase for the year in publishers and an attendance at the Memorial of 9,893.

FIRST BRANCH EXPANSION

There was a growing need to expand the branch facilities to keep pace with the remarkable increase in publishers. After all, in less than 15 years the growth climbed from just a handful of publishers before the Korean War to well over 5,000 by the beginning of the 1964 service year. In August 1964 a start was made on constructing a three-story branch extension that would triple the existing floor space.

The Bethel family moved in on May 1, 1965. The new Kingdom Hall was a Korean first—it had chairs!

PAPERBACK BOOKS FOR THE FIELD

July 19, 1966, was another historic day. From that time forward all Society literature in the Korean

language would be printed in Korea. No longer would the U.S. branch need to provide gift shipments of hardbound books.

Books were printed in one color on newsprint and bound as paperbacks because the cost of hardbound books would make them out of reach for the public. Anyway, the message was really the important thing and that would be the same. Besides, most literature manufactured in Korea at the time was also paperback. The first publication? *"Things in Which It Is Impossible for God to Lie."*

The first 50,000 copies of the book *The Truth That Leads to Eternal Life*, released in Korean in January 1969, lasted only a few months and had to be reprinted immediately. Brothers now put this inexpensive home Bible study instrument to good use in the field. The number of Bible studies soared! Almost all who came into the truth during that time learned the basic Bible doctrines through this publication. To date, over 2.2 million copies of this book have been printed and distributed in Korea alone! The publisher count rose from just over 8,000 at the end of 1968 to over 30,000 in 1982, when the book *You Can Live Forever in Paradise on Earth* was released.

The 22nd consecutive peak of publishers, a total of 10,610, was quickly followed by the "Peace on Earth" international convention in Seoul held at Chang Choong Gymnasium in October 1969. To an audience of 14,529, Brother Franz released the book *Is the Bible Really the Word of God?* For the first time, a publication in Korean was released simultaneously with English.

A MATTER OF CONSCIENCE

The Republic of Korea has one of the largest armed forces in the world. Universal military conscription has been in effect with no exemptions for clergy or for conscientious objectors.

On February 22, 1971, a registered letter from the government arrived at the branch. The letter accused the Witnesses of teaching people not to sing patriotic songs or vote in political elections and of deliberately encouraging evasion of military conscription. In answering these charges, the branch explained why Jehovah's Witnesses are not anarchists and the Bible basis for subjection to the superior authorities. The branch said that Witnesses do not interfere in any government process, including voting or conscription.

Matters worsened. After learning of further developments, Brother Knorr suggested that the brothers visit the U.S. embassy. So on March 24, 1971, Brothers Steele and Hamilton met for one hour with U.S. Deputy Chief of Mission, Francis T. Underhill. After a lively discussion about the work of Jehovah's Witnesses and their stand on these matters, Mr. Underhill said that he would report the matter to the State Department in Washington. However, nothing further on the matter developed at that time.

So down through the years, legions of brothers—old and young—have had to brave these issues. Some could not complete their schooling or could not find work. Still others who have lived out their lives in integrity await the resurrection.

LARGEST EVER

The time was approaching for the third international convention to be held in Seoul, in the summer of 1973. The "Divine Victory" convention was the largest single convention ever held in Korea—over 29,000 in attendance and 2,002 baptized.

Brother Park Ii-kyun, convention overseer for this convention, gives this report: "Because of unrest within the country, there was still an uneasiness on the part of the authorities. As a result, the police dispatched 130 plainclothesmen, and 2 of them were stationed in each of the convention departments in addition to those throughout the stadium. The police remarked that we obeyed better than college-educated people.

"When it starts to rain at sports events and other gatherings outdoors, pandemonium breaks out, with everyone making a mad dash for the exits. During one session of the convention, rain began to pour down, and the police rushed to open all the exits, but to their amazement, nobody left. Rather, all opened their umbrellas and just sat calmly and listened to the program.

"In addition, the stadium manager told me that the stadium has never been so clean, and if he could rent it to Jehovah's Witnesses once a month, it would always be clean."

A CAUSE FOR CONCERN

All seemed well in the spring of 1975. The Beth-el family moved into their spacious new facilities, and Brother Lloyd Barry visited from Japan to give the dedication talk. The 1975 service year

ended with an outstanding field report—including 8,120 baptized that year. Thus, in just three years' time 19,600 were baptized. Well over half of the Korean Witnesses had been in the truth for less than three years.

However, the first few months of the 1976 service year began with a marked decrease in publishers and home Bible studies. This downward trend was to continue for over three years, bottoming out in a 26-percent decrease in publishers, from 32,693 in August 1975 to 24,285 in November 1978. Memorial attendance dropped too, from over 68,000 in 1975 to 49,545 in 1978. The brothers at the branch were perplexed. Would the trend be reversed?

Of course, neither they nor the Society were just letting it slide by. The Society's letter of April 4, 1977, stated:

"We hope the brothers are careful in their teaching. Evidently some were very strong on the 1975 date, and so a good foundation was not laid. The foundation, of course, should be faith in Christ Jesus and the ransom sacrifice, and the dedication should be with understanding."

A very candid observation indeed! Too much emphasis was placed on a date by some Bible teachers. Many newly baptized ones took up the truth on a wave of emotion. Even some elders had their hopes pinned to 1975. In addition, materialism seeped into the land as a result of the rapid economic growth in Korea, and nationalism was on the rise. The effect: apathy among the brothers.

THE ROAD BACK, LONG BUT CERTAIN

More than 24,000 Witnesses, solid in the faith, were not shaken by any date. Still, the road back to a new peak of publishers was to take eight long years and was not reached until August 1983.

Now there was no emotional leaping into the truth, and those being baptized were making a dedication with understanding. Many who had become inactive began to return, recognizing there really was no other place to go. Many learned the hard way that the truth is to be found only in one place.

These brothers on the Branch Committee have served an average of 37 years in full-time service. Front row, left to right: Chae Soo-wan, Don Steele (Branch Committee coordinator), and Chun Young-soon. Back row, left to right: Park li-kyun, Milton Hamilton, and Park Chong-il



FIRST ASSEMBLY HALL IN ORIENT

By the middle of the 1970's, difficulties arose in obtaining suitable places for circuit assemblies and special events. As a solution, the brothers decided to build an Assembly Hall with their own hands. Its design and construction were simple but sufficient to make an assembly comfortable for all in attendance. Therefore, the first Assembly Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses in the Orient was dedicated in April 1976 in Pusan, Korea. To date, Korea has seven Assembly Halls serving about 75 percent of all the publishers.

MAGAZINE PUBLISHING ADJUSTMENTS

New government regulations in 1980 forced the branch to make adjustments in publishing the *Watchtower* and *Awake!* magazines. So if an organization published two magazines, only one would be allowed to continue. In November 1980 the *Awake!* magazine was one of 67 periodicals canceled by the government. Every effort was made by the Korean branch to reverse the decision but to no avail.

Then, after two months, word came unexpectedly from the authorities that they would let a supplement to *The Watchtower* be published. Holy spirit was working! The supplement would carry the same date as *The Watchtower*, the first and fifteenth. This procedure is still followed.

MISSIONARIES BARRED

Foreign missionaries are no longer needed to work the Korean field, since the local Korean pioneers can adequately care for this. But missionaries are still needed for training and building up the brothers spiritually. With this in mind, the Society assigned



① *Original residence building dedicated in 1982*

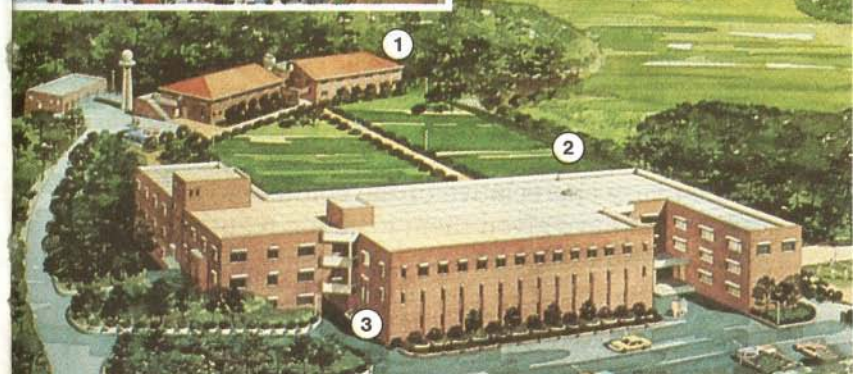


② *Office building; factory (cream-colored part in center); and, at right, new residence building dedicated in 1985*



③ *Factory addition, at right, dedicated in 1987*

Architect's rendering of Korea branch facility



On May 23, 1987, a three-story addition to the branch facility in Kongdo was dedicated by Milton G. Henschel of the Governing Body. The new factory building houses a new 130-ton, four-color, web-fed offset printing press. Brother Henschel spoke to 2,060 assembled at the branch site. This is the branch's second major addition since 1982



Japanese and Korean branch personnel worked and trained together after 85-foot-long, four-color press was installed in branch addition at Kongdo in 1986

five more missionaries to Korea in the fall of 1977. Much to the surprise of the branch, they could not obtain visas. The 17 missionaries already serving in the country could remain, but no new Watch Tower missionaries would be allowed. Furthermore, those then present would not be given reentry permits if they left the country.

However, since late in 1987, the missionaries have been very appreciative of the consideration the authorities have given them to obtain reentry permits in the usual way.

GIGANTIC PROJECT

In the summer of 1979, the Governing Body gave the branch permission to begin looking for a new branch location. After a one-year search, a nine-acre piece of farm and forest land was found about 42 miles south of Seoul, in Kyonggi Do, Ansung Kun, Kongdo Myun. This would place the branch in a pollution-free environment.

This expansion project was of gigantic proportions when compared to previous ones. The branch would now be taking on the work of printing magazines and also preparing for future printing of books. A glow of excitement prevailed on May 8, 1982, when the completed buildings were dedicated and Brothers Franz and Barry from world headquarters were on hand to give special talks.

Because of the help from the brothers in the United States and Japan, as well as cooperation from a local commercial printing company, the branch now has its own printery. In a very short time the press-run of each issue of the magazines increased to almost 200,000, keeping all the machinery busy all day long.

Three years after the branch was moved to Kongdo, Brother Albert Schroeder of the Governing Body, serving as the zone overseer, dedicated an addition to the property in May 1985. The addition doubled the floor space to just under 100,000 square feet. The publishers increased from 30,000 in 1982 to over 39,600 in 1985. What growth!

Since Seoul is not only the capital of South Korea but also the center of business, it was deemed necessary to have the registered office of the corporation remain there. A fine new building containing

this office for the branch, a Kingdom Hall, and sufficient storage room for a literature depot was built in Seoul and dedicated on December 20, 1986. Four members of the Bethel family live and work there.

HIGH-SPEED WEB PRESS HUMMING

Almost 600 years ago Koreans advanced printing technology by inventing the first movable metal printing type. Today, Korean Witnesses use state-of-the-art printing technology to advance Kingdom interests. With their prepress work flowing out of computer-assisted equipment and a new Mitsubishi web-offset press rolling out 500 full-color 32-page magazines per minute, they have no problem producing sufficient magazines and literature. The first idea of obtaining such a large press began in the summer of 1983 when Brother Lloyd Barry, serving as zone overseer, saw the overworked condition of the printery.

At that time the factory was filled to capacity. There was absolutely no space available to put a 130-ton press, 85 feet in length, on the floor. This meant another building, a second expansion in Kongdo in just four years. Up to this time the Korean magazines had been three months behind the English editions, so the prospect of printing magazines simultaneously with the English made all the work worth while.

Importing such a press, though, was beset with many problems. Government policy stipulated that a recommendation had to be received from the government before permission would be granted for import. This was next to impossible. However, in the summer of 1985 that restriction was lifted, and the

brothers at the branch immediately obtained an import license. Within six weeks of obtaining that permit, the law changed back again, requiring a recommendation. The holy spirit had opened the way; the brothers acted quickly. Thus, in the branch today the printing press is humming so that the publishers' hands will be kept filled with literature for use in witnessing.

LOOKING AHEAD

To its people, Korea is known as *Chosŏn*, the "land of the morning calm." Years ago the Korean brothers wondered how they would ever be able to reach all the people in their country with the Kingdom message and how many of these Jehovah would choose as his "sheep."—Matt. 25:32.

Today only 7 percent of the territory is unassigned, and almost all of this is cared for in the summer months by publishers. Territories in the cities are often covered more than once a month. Since well over one fourth of the more than 48,000 publishers are in the regular pioneer work in addition to those in auxiliary pioneer work every month, the people of Korea know who Jehovah's Witnesses are. Truly, Jehovah has chosen his "sheep" also among Koreans.

As one Bible writer put it: "In the morning sow your seed and until the evening do not let your hand rest; for you are not knowing where this will have success, either here or there, or whether both of them will alike be good." Seed has been sown and the harvest has been good. The future is bright. Only Jehovah's spirit could have made it happen here in Korea.—Eccl. 11:6.

NEARLY five centuries ago, a tall, well-built man with an aquiline nose stood on the deck of his ship, scanning the coastline of Central America in search of a passageway to the Indian Ocean. He found none. However, what he did discover in 1502 was the country christened Costa Rica, meaning "Rich Coast."

The man was Christopher Columbus, an Italian sailing under the flag of Spain, on his fourth and last voyage to the New World. He and other explorers also hoped to strike gold in Costa Rica. Instead, the area yielded little in precious metals. Unknown to Columbus, however, the greatest riches would be its people, especially those who possess qualities that make them precious to Jehovah.

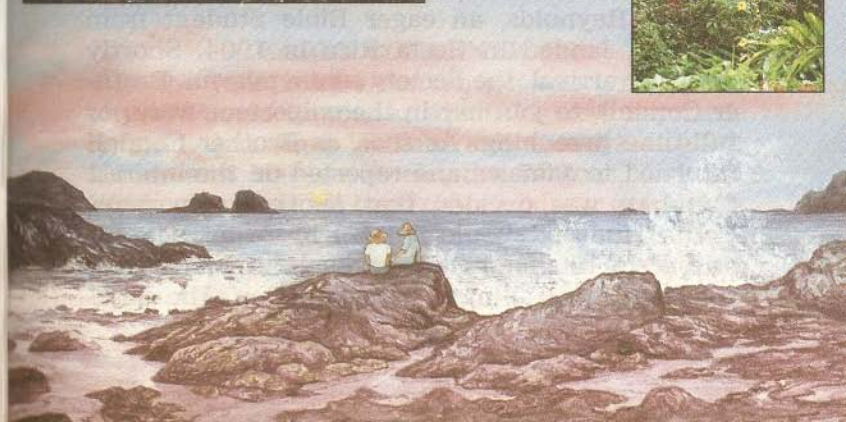
The land that Columbus discovered was already inhabited by Indians, who had settled on this neck of land joining North and South America at least by the year 1000. What is the land like today?

Flanked by the Atlantic Ocean (Caribbean Sea) on the east and the Pacific on the west, Costa Rica has a line of high, rugged mountain ranges stretching from the Nicaraguan border on the north to the Panamanian border on the southeast. Some of the highest peaks are active volcanoes. At the lower altitudes along the coast, where the climate is hot, tropical forests flourish. The majority of the population have settled along the cool, high, central plateau around the capital and largest city, San José, where coffee trees dress the hillsides encircling the city.

Today, 97 percent of the country's estimated population of 2,600,000 is mestizos and whites,

NICARAGUA

COSTA RICA



mainly of Spanish descent, with an Indian population of about 5,000. Spanish is the official language, and the state religion is Roman Catholicism, although non-Catholic religions also exist freely.

The late 1800's saw many immigrants arriving in Costa Rica from Jamaica, Trinidad, and Barbados. These hardy folk came to work on the United Fruit Company's prospering banana plantations along the Atlantic Coast. With them, of course, came their Protestant and Catholic religions and customs. Strong-willed and hardworking, these people for the most part were lovers of the Bible.

BIBLE TRUTH DISCOVERED

Thus, before the turn of the 20th century, a discovery more momentous than that by Columbus was made in Costa Rica—Bible truth. How the Kingdom message was first brought to Costa Rica is a mystery. But Jehovah's Witnesses in Jamaica report that two Jamaicans who had migrated to Costa Rica, H. P. Clarke and Louis Facey, found the truth there and brought the good news back to their Jamaican homeland.

Anna Reynolds, an eager Bible Student from Jamaica, landed in Costa Rica in 1904. Shortly after her arrival, the Society sent a pilgrim, Brother Condell, to join her in the colporteur work, or full-time preaching. As soon as Brother Condell returned to Jamaica and reported on the interest found, it was decided that another colporteur, Frank Hudson, should be sent to Costa Rica. He arrived in 1906 and aroused much interest among the English-speaking black population. The Janu-

ary 1, 1907, issue of *The Watch Tower* reported that, during 1906, Costa Rica was a fertile ground for Bible literature placement.

THE MESSAGE SPREADS

By the year 1914 the truth had penetrated into all parts of the Atlantic coastal zone. That was the year Henry Adamson organized the first ecclesia, or congregation, in Guácimo, a small town about 80 kilometers from Puerto Limón, the commercial center of this prosperous farming section. By then the message had even reached the capital city of San José, which was more than 160 kilometers from Puerto Limón. At least two English-speaking brothers lived there, but since San José had a Spanish-speaking population and the literature was in English, little progress was made for a number of years. Although meetings were held in private homes, they were not advertised.

Nevertheless, the work grew in other parts of the country to such an extent that it was necessary to appoint a local brother as a pilgrim (circuit overseer) and have him visit the brothers in all parts of Costa Rica, including San José. Victor Samuels was chosen.

EARLY CONVENTIONS

In the year 1914 a convention was held in the city of Puerto Limón, at which 11 were baptized. Around that time William and Claudia Goodin, Henry and Matilde Steele, the Wilsons, and the Williamses were all baptized. Children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren of these early workers have a part in the witness work in Costa Rica today. But more of this later.



*Early zealous preachers, baptized around 1914:
(top, left to right) Claudia Goodin, Lea Wilson;
(bottom) Ina Williams*

At these early conventions, the Society did not provide talk outlines. So the assigned speakers chose their own subjects and prepared their own outlines, some even speaking without notes. Money and foodstuffs were generously contributed for the meals, which would be served free at the home of one of the brothers. Highly seasoned stewed chicken, accompanied by rice and peas cooked in coconut milk, and fried ripe plantain were a must on each occasion!

At the close of the conventions, it was the custom to celebrate what were known as love feasts, at which the brothers would sing religious songs and pass soda biscuits around to all in attendance. The songs were sung in four-part harmony with melodious rich voices.

SPECIAL FEATURES

Attired in white clothes, the brothers celebrated, in a somber manner, the annual Memorial of Christ's death. Children were usually not invited, lest they interrupt and detract from the seriousness of the meal. All partook of the emblems of bread and wine, after which they would depart to their respective homes without speaking a word to one another.

Baptisms were especially arranged just before Memorial time. The brothers and sisters were encouraged to wear white suits and dresses for the occasion. In order to avoid curious onlookers, they would rise before dawn to get to the beach and complete the baptism ceremonies before the neighbors would realize what had happened. While those being baptized were dipped into the sea, the rest would harmonize in the background with songs.

The public talks were like garden talks. All the Witnesses would assemble at a prearranged place out-of-doors, and the speaker would give his Bible talk to those standing or sitting around him in a semicircle. The public also attended and joined in when the singing began.

One name applied to the brothers was the Old People's Church because little or no effort was



Henry Steele and wife, Matilde, baptized around 1914, shown with family. Many of their children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren are active Witnesses today

made to help their children spiritually, and most of those belonging to the organization were well up in years. Later, the brothers organized their own Sunday school for their children, and eventually they realized that the training of the children was the parents' own responsibility. But Matilde Steele already appreciated that need. Josephine, Matilde's seventh child, was born in 1918. When Josephine was only 40 days old, her mother took her to an assembly in Cahuita, a beach town south of Puerto Limón. It was no small venture to travel all

day by train, boat, and mule in the hot, humid weather. The rugged trip did no harm to tiny Josephine. At the age of 17 she was baptized, and she continues faithfully serving Jehovah along with her family.

SEEDS OF DISSENSION SOWN

While the organization was in its infancy, Satan began to sow discord among the brothers with seeds of envy, pride, jealousy, and selfish ambition. The spirit of contention became manifest when different ones vied for positions of prominence in the congregations. Since these were controlled democratically, elections were held periodically, and elders were voted into their positions by the raising of hands by the majority. Ambitious brothers who thought they had a better understanding of the truth than the ones voted into these positions tried to undermine the congregations' confidence in the brothers in charge. How did they do this? By raising questions and counterquestions during the meetings. The brothers took sides, and as a result, two different groups of congregation members began to meet in separate places in Puerto Limón.

NEFARIOUS INFLUENCE

More trouble was due to rain down on this small but divided group of Christians when the first president of the Watch Tower Society, Charles T. Russell, died in 1916. At world headquarters in Brooklyn, New York, there was a diabolical plot by selfish brothers to wrest supervision of the Society from the next president, Joseph F. Rutherford, and

other appointed ones. But Jehovah did not allow his organization to fall into the hands of such unfaithful ones.

One ringleader of the opposition was Paul Johnson who believed, contrary to the Society's explanation, that Jesus' ransom would also be applied on behalf of Adam and Eve. He wrote letters and sent his written material to brothers in Costa Rica, telling them not to support Brother Rutherford. A few individuals favored Johnson's teachings above the teachings of the Bible and divorced themselves from the organization.

FIRST VISIT FROM HEADQUARTERS

In 1917 Costa Rica was privileged to have its first visit by a representative from the Society's headquarters in Brooklyn, Walter Bundy, accompanied by his wife. But why would the Society go to the expense of sending a representative all the way to Costa Rica? Well, the number of Bible Students was growing. By 1918 there were 73, which meant that Costa Rica had the fourth-largest number of Witnesses of all the countries in the world. Only the British Isles, the United States, and Australia exceeded it. The population of Costa Rica at that time was less than half a million.

SOME WERE SIDETRACKED

Satan got busy again in his efforts to stamp out the truth and tried to distract the brothers from their main purpose of upholding Jehovah's name. A new organization known as the Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA) appeared on the scene among the black people in the Atlantic zone.

What was its purpose? As the name suggests, it aimed to improve conditions for black people. One of its campaigns was called the Back to Africa movement and was looked upon by the black population as something similar to the return of the Jews to Palestine.

Brothers not only showed interest in this organization but went so far as to misapply certain Bible texts to support its aims. The outcome? Some brothers became sidetracked from their work of preaching the good news of the Kingdom as the solution to man's problems. Even the pilgrim Victor Samuels was swayed. He was appointed chaplain of the UNIA and would preach at their meetings instead of at the congregation. There is no doubt about the detrimental effect this had on the brothers.

About the year 1924, Victor Samuels traveled to Africa to help the African people. In a letter that he sent from Lagos, Nigeria, to one of the brothers in Costa Rica, he related that he had placed 2,500 copies of *The Harp of God*. A great deal of publicity was given the Kingdom message in Nigeria as a result.

PATHWAY TO UNITY

After Victor Samuels left Costa Rica, Henry Adamson, from the original congregation in Guácimo, was appointed by the Society in 1924 as a pilgrim and was put in charge of the work. Some brothers in Puerto Limón did not like the way Brother Adamson handled matters, so they rebelled. About two years later, the Society sent another representative from Brooklyn, George

Young. His assignment: Unite the brothers in Puerto Limón and establish the preaching work on a proper footing again. First, under the light of a lantern, he gave a Bible lecture with slides in the Arrasty Theater in Puerto Limón. Afterward, he visited the brothers in San José to get the work going among the Spanish-speaking people in the capital.

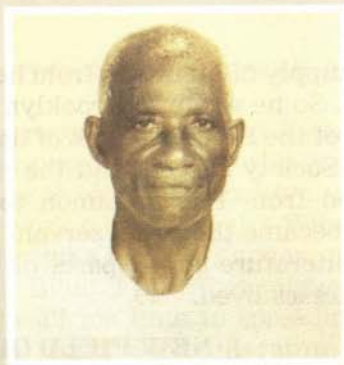
Brother Young's effort to unite the two groups in Puerto Limón proved unsuccessful, so he returned to the United States. Brother Adamson was transferred from Costa Rica to Panama in the early part of 1927. After their departure, the Society did not appoint another pilgrim to oversee the work until ten years later, in 1937. But the local brothers remained undaunted. They continued to preach in the four or five places where groups met, and they sent their field service reports directly to the Society in Brooklyn.

In 1931 the prayers of the faithful ones for unity were answered when the Society sent letters to all congregations and urged those who were in accord with the Society to adopt a new name—Jehovah's Witnesses. The resolution sounded the death knell for the rebellious, nameless group. They died out, bringing an end to the divisions in the congregation of Puerto Limón. The theocratic appointment of servants in 1938 further unified the brothers.

THE WORK FIRES UP AGAIN

Before Brother Adamson left for Panama, he organized a group in Río Hondo, a small village in the Atlantic zone. One of those baptized on November 17, 1926, was Albert Ezra Pile. He had first

**Albert Ezra Pile,
baptized in
1926, helped
fire up the work**



heard about the truth on the day he arrived from Barbados in 1918 at the age of 29, but little did he realize at the time that he was to have a major part in the history of Jehovah's Witnesses in the years to come. On retiring for the night, Ezra asked his host for something to read and was given the first volume of *Studies in the Scriptures*. That night the spark of Bible truth ignited his love for Jehovah. He soon became a pioneer and now at the age of 99 associates with the Siquirres Congregation. But how did he influence the witnessing work?

In 1927 Brother Pile moved to the small town of Siquirres, where he met Frank Hudson, the colporteur who had come to this country in 1906 to get the work started. But by this time Brother Hudson's zeal in the service had cooled off from discouragement. So Brothers Pile and Hudson decided to band together and fire up the work again in a more organized manner.

As war clouds hung over Europe in 1937, Brother Pile feared that the threat of war would cut off

the supply of literature from headquarters to Costa Rica. So he wrote to Brooklyn and offered to take care of the Society's stock of literature at his home. The Society agreed, and the literature was transferred from Puerto Limón to Siquirres. Brother Pile became the depot servant and would dispatch the literature to all parts of the country where Witnesses lived.

NEW FIELD OPENS

Up to now we have only discussed the events along the Atlantic Coast among the English-speaking population. But there was still no real effort being made to reach the Spanish-speaking people with the Kingdom message in this part of the country.

Siquirres is where the vast Spanish-language field opened up in the Atlantic zone when Florencio Pérez, a Nicaraguan, heard the truth from Frank Hudson in an unusual way. The year was 1932. A statue belonging to Brother Hudson is what whetted Florencio's appetite for the truth. Brother Hudson had made a solid model of Nebuchadnezzar's dream image with a head of gold, chest of silver, and legs of iron. He used to put this model on the porch of his house, and when any passersby stopped, he would explain its meaning. Sometimes he would set up a blackboard in the marketplace to explain Bible prophecies to the gathered people.

Frank Hudson spoke little Spanish, and Florencio spoke very little English. Despite this language barrier, he became interested in Hudson's explana-

tion of the Bible, even teaching himself how to read and write.

When Florencio read the booklet *Home and Happiness*, he was convinced that this was the truth and wrote the Society in Brooklyn, saying that he wanted to work with Jehovah's Witnesses. The Society replied with a letter of encouragement and sent a Spanish Bible. From that moment on, he began to devote all his time to spreading the Kingdom message, using Bible literature from Brother Hudson. Finally, in 1938 Florencio was baptized at an assembly in Siquirres.

FIRST SPANISH PIONEER

A year before Florencio Pérez was baptized (although he had already made a dedication), he applied to the Society to enter the pioneer service. He was appointed on June 1, 1937, thus becoming the first Spanish-speaking pioneer appointed in Costa Rica. His first assignment was the Spanish-speaking population of the Atlantic zone. He was also assigned to work with the small Spanish-speaking congregation of San José.

Brother Pérez used a wide variety of methods to spread the Kingdom message. Sometimes he would tie booklets to tree branches along paths where passersby could find them. Or he would go to the airport in San José and place literature with overseas passengers and make them promise to pass the literature on to someone else. Trekking on foot through dense jungle, he would sleep wherever night found him, at times blanketed only by the stars and at the mercy of the mosquitoes. He often broke the silence of the night by strumming on his

ever-present guitar. His roaming, evangelizing spirit traveled with him into Nicaragua, where he continued pioneering for many years.

SAN JOSÉ CONGREGATION

How had the Spanish-speaking congregation in San José been formed? Since the days of the first world war, English-language meetings had been held in the home of Brother Williams, who learned the truth in 1912 and later became the presiding overseer. He had formerly been a lay preacher in an Evangelical church where his wife played the organ. As there were few English-speaking people living in the capital at that time, growth was slow.

However, when Spanish literature was made available, preaching became easier. By 1931 a group of 10 or 12 Spanish-speaking people were meeting together in private homes. Felipe Salmerón was one of them. He also witnessed in the Pacific Coast port of Puntarenas. Finally, after more than 30 years, the truth had stretched from coast to coast.

Toward the end of 1941, Brother Pile was sent from Siquirres to San José to replace Brother Williams as an overseer. The congregation now met in the home of Flavio Romero, and the Society corresponded with them through the pioneer Florencio Pérez.

GILEAD GRADUATES ADD STRENGTH

When making his report to the Society about the condition of the congregation in San José, Brother Pile recommended that a brother firm in theocratic manner be sent to Costa Rica to supervise the



First group of missionaries. Front row, left to right: Charles Palmer; Lora Lea Palmer; Hermena Siebenlist; Theodore Siebenlist, branch servant from 1944 to 1952. Back row, left to right: William Eugene Call, Donald Burt, and "Woody" Blackburn

work. The brothers did not have to wait long because on December 23, 1943, Theodore Siebenlist and his wife, Hermena, from the first class of Gilead, arrived. Costa Rica was one of the first four countries in the world to receive Gilead graduates.

Brother Siebenlist had a solid background with the organization. His father was baptized in 1913, two days after Theodore was born. His parents' home was used for meetings, and he participated with them in tract distribution. He was baptized at the Washington, D.C., convention in 1935. At a convention in 1937, he met Hermena Deines and they married the following year.

The effects of World War II, which was still raging in Europe, were felt in Costa Rica. So when the Siebenlists arrived in San José, signs of austerity were seen everywhere. They searched for a month before they found suitable living quarters in a second-floor apartment with an adjoining room that could serve as the Kingdom Hall. It was conveniently located half a block off the main street and thus became a familiar address. The room continued to be used as a Kingdom Hall until 1956, when a branch office was built with an adjoining Kingdom Hall.

BRANCH ESTABLISHED

About three months after the arrival of the missionaries, Nathan H. Knorr, the third president of the Watch Tower Society, and his aide Milton Henschel visited. This was the first time that a president of the Society had set foot in Costa Rica. The literature depot had already been transferred from Siquirres to San José in January 1944, and now in March, Brother Knorr set up a branch office. This was a turning point for supervised direction of the witnessing work. During his visit, Brother Knorr arranged for a search to be made for a larger missionary home, as more help was to arrive. A home was found in the northwestern section of San José.

During the following two years, Charles and Lora Lea Palmer, Woodrow ("Woody") Blackburn, Donald H. Burt, William Eugene Call, and Franklin and Emily Hardin, all graduates of the Gilead School, joined the missionary family. What a heap of fine help! Donald Burt stayed only a short time,

since he was reassigned to Honduras and later to Peru, where he now serves as coordinator of the Branch Committee.

UNITY IN SAN JOSÉ

Besides the former divided group in Puerto Limón, another one existed in San José. What happened to that group in San José? Brother Siebenlist encouraged unity. His motto was, "Do it right, or don't do it at all."

Brother Siebenlist's 1944 annual report to the Society glowed with progress. He wrote: "The Spanish brethren in Costa Rica, now numbering about 75, were divided when we arrived here in December and up until the preceding month had maintained two Kingdom Halls in San José. Immediately upon our arrival, the two groups were invited to unite and meet regularly in the same hall. At the first meeting both groups were present, numbering about 30 in all. Now, by the Lord's grace, the local organization is working quite smoothly, and the group has grown to about 60."

By the following April, there was a new peak in publishers—223! What growth, considering that when the Siebenlists had arrived less than two years earlier, about 120 publishers made up the four English-speaking and the two Spanish-speaking congregations!

SERVANT TO THE BRETHREN

During his first year in Costa Rica, Brother Siebenlist served as a servant to the brethren (circuit overseer). He visited the six congregations and the

isolated interested persons, even though the distances were far and travel was difficult. With the arrival of additional missionaries, more visits to congregations could be made.

One missionary, Brother Blackburn, after a three-week trip to the seven English-speaking congregations as a servant to the brethren, reported: "The zeal and the love for the Theocracy shown by these brethren is to be admired. The brethren are financially poor, yet they are very liberal in taking the Society's servants into their homes and giving them the best they have to offer. They are meek and desire instructions. They are not complainers because of having to walk miles through the heat and mud to make backcalls [return visits] and Bible studies."

Brother Blackburn still continues in the full-time service—almost 40 years after he filed that report. He has served in Nicaragua, Honduras, and Mexico with his family.

The visits of the servant to the brethren were appreciated not only by the congregations but also by the local population. Franklin Hardin (better known as "Doc" because he was a chiropractor) and his wife, Emily, visited Puerto Limón in 1946. The local newspaper commented: "The distinguished visitor was accompanied by his very pleasant wife. They are two whom we have never seen before, but the brief moments in their presence readily furnishes charming and memorable impressions, and the essence of their speech enriches and delights us as if we had had their acquaintance for many years. We followed penetratingly the many scriptures he quoted in proof of his message."



"Doc" and Emily Hardin served in the circuit work and did a lot of traveling by train



Arnold Williams, first native circuit overseer, quit a promising job to preach the good news

FIRST NATIVE CIRCUIT OVERSEER

The report on the circuit work in the early days would not be complete without mentioning Arnold Williams from Puerto Limón. He administered a commissary for the United Fruit Company, but as soon as he was able, he made arrangements to regular pioneer. In this he set an excellent example for the younger ones in putting Kingdom interests first. Because of his zeal and determination, he was trained as a circuit overseer in San José and in 1948 started circuit work. He married Mildred Gumbs (now Ortega), and they continued together in the circuit work until 1959. Since he was educated in both English and Spanish, he translated for Brother Knorr during that first visit. It was a sad loss to all when he died at a young age, leaving behind many "letters of recommendation."—2 Cor. 3:1.

PIONEER WORK SPREADS THE MESSAGE

Besides the valuable aid of the missionaries and circuit overseers, pioneers played a significant part in spreading the message out to new areas. At the beginning of 1944, there were two pioneers, but by August the group rose to nine.

There were 13 publishers meeting in Grecia, where Sisters Evelyn Ferguson (now Taylor) and Mildred Gumbs were assigned as the first special pioneers in the country. During the following year, 1945, Eugenia Dillon also joined the special pioneer ranks.

Berta Solera, an aged widow pioneering in San José, had a desire to return to her native province, Guanacaste, but had no money until she sold her only means of support, her little sewing machine, in order to pay for the trip. She and Anita Taylor made a



*Evelyn Ferguson
(now Taylor),
special pioneer
since 1944,
shown with her
phonograph*

preaching tour there in 1947 and found persons, in both Liberia and Filadelfia, whose interest in spiritual things moved them to open their homes to pioneers. By 1949 Berta, accompanied by her daughter, was assigned to Liberia as a special pioneer, where she was joined by two of the Swaby girls. Who are the Swaby girls?

PIONEERING SISTERS

Claudia Goodin, a tall, fair-skinned woman of Jamaican origin, had two daughters, Joy and Fe. At that time, Claudia was living with her fleshly sister Arelminta Swaby in Puerto Limón. Arelminta had four daughters—Dorell, Calvie, Lila, and Casel. Dorell was the first of the Swaby girls to venture out as a pioneer. She and Corina Osorio (now Novoa) were assigned to Point Quepos, which is on the west coast. Dorell's three sisters later joined the pioneer ranks too.

Claudia Goodin's two daughters, Fe and Joy, started special pioneering in 1948 in Alajuela, where another congregation had been established. Dora Argentina Vargas (now Call) was also added to the pioneer force. In 1950 Dorell Swaby and Fe and Joy Goodin attended Gilead School and were assigned to Panama. Lila Swaby and Evelyn Ferguson went to Gilead in the spring of 1953 and Argentina joined the next class. Ever since the 1940's, these diligent sisters have been busy planting many seeds of Kingdom truth.

THE HORSE AND THE BARBER

Around 1944 when the branch office was being established in San José, a follower of the Roman

Catholic faith in San Carlos received through the mail the booklet *Armageddon* and passed it on to Naftalí Salazar, an Evangelical. Naftalí was so amazed by the things he read in the booklet that he showed it to the pastor of his church. The pastor became incensed and warned him against this "Russellite poison."

However, Naftalí desired to meet someone from the Watch Tower organization, the publisher of the booklet. He had heard about an Italian barber who was also receiving the literature. The barber lived in Grecia, about a hundred kilometers away. Naftalí resolved to visit the barber. He figured that in order to travel to Grecia, he could sign up as a cattle driver for a three-day journey and on the return trip stop at Grecia.

Upon arrival in Grecia, one lead directed Naftalí to the home of an elderly couple who could not speak Spanish. He took out his cherished booklet and showed it to them. They could only say "Bible, Bible" and quickly point down the road to a hill. Disappointed, he mounted his horse and trotted off in that direction. At the top of the hill, Naftalí turned off the main route, entered a narrow track, and stopped by a gate. Naftalí opened the gate, and the horse turned around to help him close it. They were on someone's farm. Naftalí and his mount trotted across the field to another gate. In front of the gate was a small hut with a man, his wife, and two small children sitting outside.

"What do you want?" asked the man.

"Excuse me, but my horse brought me here. I'm looking for an Italian barber."

"That's me, and who are you?"

"I'm Naftalí Salazar from San Carlos."

Apparently having already heard about this man, the barber raised his hands and said, "Let Jehovah be praised. He has sent you here." What a happy day that was for Naftalí!

MARRIAGES AND LOTTERIES

As the Kingdom work was branching out, there also was a need for moral cleansing. In 1946 Brother Knorr was accompanied on his second visit by Brother F. W. Franz, who proved to be a great help. The subject of legalizing marriages was brought to the local brothers' attention. Leonard Hurst, who was not then legally married to the woman he was living with, recalls what Brother Knorr said. "All of you here tonight who are living with a woman but haven't got your marriage legally arranged, I'm giving you some advice. Go to the Catholic Church and put your name down as a member because there you can practice these things. But this is God's organization, and you can't practice these things here."

Leonard thought that Brother Knorr was talking directly to him, so in less than a month he obtained a divorce from his former wife and became legally married to the woman with whom he had been living.

The buying of lottery tickets was another matter that needed adjustment. Evelyn Ferguson always picked a certain lucky number and even prayed that her number would win. Why? So that she could pioneer. When she realized that this was not

Scripturally correct, she was determined to stop buying lottery tickets.

The man from whom Evelyn bought the lottery tickets called as usual and insisted that she play her lucky number again. Evelyn, however, remained firm in her decision and was not a bit disappointed when her number won that very day. Soon after that incident, she did become a pioneer—without the help of “the god of Good Luck.”—Isa. 65:11.

“DUST TO DUST”

The Witnesses also stopped following traditional religious practices that were questionable. For example, at the funeral of a Witness, the brother in charge of the burial service concluded with a short prayer at the grave site. Because he did not follow religious tradition by parroting “ashes to ashes and dust to dust” and toss the customary handful of earth on the casket, the religionists present were highly incensed and did it themselves.

Some time later an elderly sister died. At her grave site, just before lowering the coffin, the brother giving the funeral talk opened his Bible and read the words, “For dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.” (Gen. 3:19, *King James Version*) Turning to the crowd that included those same religionists, the brother said without pausing: “Ain’t nothin’ said here about ashes. Lower the box, brothers.” Dumbstruck, the opposers did not throw their traditional handful of dirt.

What were the results of the circuit overseer visits, the influx of missionaries, and adherence to Scriptural laws? Unity and growth. Even before the 1950’s began, the thousand mark in publishers was passed, more than 850 Bible studies were being

reported monthly, and 32 congregations were established.

ASSEMBLY IN RURALS

Up until 1950 most of the assemblies had been held in Puerto Limón and San José. But now sufficient interest had been aroused for an assembly to be held in a small settlement called Argentina de Tilarán.

It was not easy for Brother and Sister Siebenlist to get to Argentina de Tilarán. They traveled first by plane and then boarded an old bus, which took them along a bumpy road. At a fork where the road ended, the brothers were waiting for them with horses. The remainder of the trip was made on horseback. Only scattered farms surrounded the assembly site. The brothers, nevertheless, were very excited—this was their first assembly. Some of them had traveled on foot over mountain trails for up to nine hours. When the count was taken on Sunday, almost 300 persons were in attendance. Some stood for the sessions and others sat on improvised benches made of wooden boards placed on top of sacks of rice.

During the assembly, a newly appointed Theocratic Ministry School overseer conducted the school. Before he began, the circuit overseer gave him detailed instructions on how to counsel the student speakers. For example, he was told that he should counsel each student on two good points and two weak points. The circuit overseer felt confident that the brother understood and that the school would run smoothly. To the circuit overseer’s chagrin, after the first student completed his

talk, the school overseer stood up and nervously, yet sincerely, said: "Brother, you had two good points and two bad points. Try to do better next time." Then, without another word of counsel, he introduced the next student.

FROM FISHERMEN TO FISHERS OF MEN

In 1940 Josephine Steele journeyed to Moín, just north of Puerto Limón. To begin her witnessing, she set up her phonograph at the train station in Moín. She wound the phonograph's motor with a number of hardy turns of the crank, gingerly placed the needle on the first groove of a recording of Judge Rutherford, and flicked the starter switch. "Religion is a snare and a racket," boomed the voice from the phonograph. A large group of men gathered. One of the group, Vincente Sanguinetti, sent for his fisherman friend, Silbert Spence. Silbert, with pants rolled up, approached the cluster of listeners, put his hands on his hips, looked at his friend Vincente, and asked: "Who's that talking?"

"It's the Judge, silly!" answered Vincente, referring to Joseph F. Rutherford, the Watch Tower Society's second president.

Since Vincente had already read some of Brother Rutherford's books, the two men kept Josephine busy all day with their Bible questions. Vincente told Sister Steele that one day at sea in the midst of a terrible storm he prayed to the Lord for help and promised to serve him if he survived. He still wanted to fulfill his promise to God, but the two "D's" were bothering him—damsels and drugs. A Bible study was started with these two men, and



Silbert Spence, moved by the recording by Brother Rutherford "Religion Is a Snare and a Racket," started pioneering with his wife, Valmina, in 1948. Member of the Branch Committee until his death in May 1985

soon afterward, on September 21, 1940, both were baptized, as was Silbert's wife, Valmina.

"My joy began to increase as I came to realize that Jesus' words to Peter and Andrew were being fulfilled in me," said Silbert. "I was now fishing for men." Joshua Steelman, visiting as a special representative of the Society, asked Silbert: "When do you plan to go pioneering, when Armageddon is knocking at the door?" Silbert saw the urgency of the times. He and Valmina started pioneering November 1948.

Even though Silbert had a hard time speaking the Spanish language, he was assigned as the Spanish circuit overseer. At first, all his talks were in English, and someone would translate. One day a Spanish-speaking brother reassured Silbert with the words: "Brother Silbert, don't be worried about your Spanish. We realize that you have trouble, but at the same time we learn the truth more easily from you." Thus love has no language barriers.

Silbert's wife worked faithfully with him in the circuit work until her death in 1974. He faithfully served as a member of the Branch Committee until his death in May 1985.

FIRST ASSEMBLY HALL

The increase in the number of Witnesses began having an impact on the religious leaders throughout the country. They put pressure on social organizations, thus making it more and more difficult to book places for circuit assemblies in Puerto Limón. So the local Witnesses decided to build a Kingdom Hall that could double as an Assembly Hall. On a lot just three blocks from the central market, a two-story frame building was erected. The Kingdom Hall was located upstairs, with the downstairs containing living quarters for the circuit overseer, as well as a kitchen and serving space for the assembly cafeteria. On Thursday, August 19, 1954, it was dedicated. In 1972, this building was rebuilt and at present is being used by three congregations and for the smaller English assemblies.

KINGDOM HALL BURNED

On the opposite coast, the Pacific, the brothers did not experience the same joy with their Kingdom Hall. A congregation of about 45 publishers met in the small rural community of Manzanillo de Ario. Opposition mounted against them until threats of violence bore ugly fruit.

One night, about midnight, the local Kingdom Hall suddenly went up in flames. It was so quickly consumed that nothing could be saved—a great

loss of material and spiritual goods for already poor people. Did this dastardly incendiary blow cripple the Kingdom work? No! Inactive publishers sprang to spiritual life; new ones began associating with the Witnesses. They moved their meeting place to a brother's home and continued in their arrangements for the Memorial celebration.

Did this outrage affect the Memorial attendance? Yes, but for the good. There was an increase of nearly 300 percent over former years. True faith cannot be shaken by opposers, a fact marvelously demonstrated by Christ Jesus and the apostles and being imitated in this century by thousands of Witnesses who are proving the quality of their faith under test.—1 Pet. 1:6, 7.

MOB ACTION STOPPED

Much of the opposition was clergy inspired. For example, in order to warn their flock whenever the Witnesses were in the neighborhood, the priests installed loudspeakers in the belfries of their churches. They printed signs stating: "We are Catholics. We do not accept Protestant propaganda." Then the clergy sold the signs to their parishioners, who in turn would display them in the windows of their houses. Of course, the Witnesses ignored those signs.

Eugenia Dillon found that not all people were swayed by the clergy. One day when she was in field service, a mob gathered and followed her, shouting: "The virgin of the angels reigns here. Long live the sovereign pontiff! We are Catholics and don't accept Protestant propaganda." She quickly prayed to Jehovah for help. At the next

door she called on, a man, spotting the mob, asked: "Are these people following you? Come inside, and I will defend you from this bunch of savages."

Once Sister Dillon was inside, believing her prayer was answered, the man dashed into another room, grabbed his revolver, loaded it, and ran out of the house to the gate. There, waving his revolver, he shouted to the mob: "This girl is not of my religion, but I defend her and order this mob to break up if you don't want to die."

Immediately the mob dispersed. The man returned to the house with a smile, saying he was not really going to kill them but that the barrel of a gun was the only language that this gang of demonized savages would understand.

On another occasion, Brother Pile, toting his phonograph, took a large group of publishers with him to work Juan Viñas, west of Siquirres. The local priest began pealing the church bells, calling in his people. He instructed some of his supporters to go from door to door to tell others not to listen when the Witnesses called.

The priest must have gloated, thinking he was having success, until the *jefe político*, a sort of mayor-sheriff, summoned the brothers and other policemen into his office. Then the *jefe político* requested that Brother Pile play the phonograph message. After listening to the Kingdom records, the policemen accepted the literature. The sheriff could see nothing wrong with the witnessing work and told the brothers to continue preaching.

A triumph resulted when John Craddock gave a public talk in San Ramón at the park bandstand. A

few local persons, the pioneers from San Ramón, and about six brothers that had accompanied Brother Craddock from San José were in attendance. (John and his wife, Emma Marie, graduates of the tenth class of Gilead, had joined the missionary family in 1949. Now, just a year and a half later, they were about to get a taste of the opposition.) A priest with a group of children mounted the bandstand behind Brother Craddock and started to heckle him. At the same time, a prearranged group of adults stormed from the far end of the city plaza and shouted, "Kill him, kill him!"

Apparently the mob only wanted to intimidate Brother Craddock because they passed right by without touching him. Unable to finish his discourse, John, accompanied by Marie and the others from San José, went to the bus stop, where the mayor of the city approached them and said how sorry he was that the discourse had been interrupted. The mayor pleaded that John come back to give another discourse and promised that police protection would be provided.

So it was, three weeks later, that a group of publishers returned to San Ramón and even advertised the talk all over the city with handbills. When the time arrived for the talk, the plaza was lined with policemen. This time there were no disturbances.

CIVIL WAR

The 1948 elections resulted in a revolution. This made moving about in field service difficult. Eugenia Dillon, while working a rural territory with her preaching partner, was stopped by soldiers. "Halt,

who goes there?" barked the soldiers, with their rifles pointed at the sisters. "What political party do you belong to?"

"We are Jehovah's Witnesses," the sisters replied. "We are announcing God's Kingdom by means of Christ Jesus, the only government that can bring real peace to mankind."

While the soldiers searched their bags, the pioneers witnessed to them. The sisters were released and continued to preach to the people in the neighborhood, who were in anguish because of the war.

During the civil war, many of the false shepherds, the clergy, abandoned their flocks, fleeing for their lives. This gave the Witnesses an opportunity to preach to the sheeplike ones left behind. Now the populace were able to see that their clergy-shepherds had not been feeding them but only fleecing them. When the false shepherds returned, they found, to their dismay, many of their flock studying with the Witnesses.

TRANSPORT BY MULE CAR

Transportation is closely linked with the preaching work, and a variety of means have been employed in Costa Rica. Trains have been used. But not all trains are pulled by a mechanical engine. The mule car is a unique vehicle that rolls on a narrow-gauge track and is pulled by a mule. It can give you more thrills than a roller coaster.

The car consists of a platform mounted on wheels. The platform has benches that can seat 20 persons. As the mule car speeds along the track, the only brake consists of a wooden post mounted through a hole in the floor. The post pivots like a

lever and presses against the wheel. Thus, downgrades spell danger for the mule if the driver does not prevent the rolling platform from crashing into the animal. The passengers are also sprayed with mud slung from the mule's hooves, but that is the least of the problems. Derailments can fling passengers into the air, causing broken arms and legs upon landing.

Rivers are traveled in small boats with outboard motors or in dugout canoes with wooden paddles. For example, to reach Guanacaste on a preaching tour, Sister Solera took a train to Puntarenas, then crossed the Gulf of Nicoya by boat, and later rode an ox-drawn cart for 15 hours. No small feat for a woman in her 60's!

BRANCH CHANGES

Theodore Siebenlist served as branch overseer from the forming of the branch in March 1944 until June 1952, when he and his wife left to prepare for the birth of their daughter Janet.

William Call, a graduate of the third class of Gilead who had been sent from Costa Rica to Nicaragua in 1946 to care for the branch there, returned to Costa Rica as branch overseer. He continued as such until 1954, when he married Dora Argentina Vargas, a Gilead graduate, who originally came from Guatemala. Their son Robert is now serving at Brooklyn Bethel. William Aubrey Bivens from Guatemala was next assigned as branch overseer. He and his wife, Bertha, had been in that country since graduating from the fifth class of Gilead. Later they were reassigned to Brazil, where he served as branch overseer until his death in 1969.

Since Brother Bivens had been reassigned to Brazil, Charles Sheldon acted as branch overseer until March 1964, when George Jenkins and his wife arrived. Health reasons forced Brother and Sister Jenkins to leave Costa Rica in 1966. The next branch overseer, Lorence A. Shepp, was still in Nicaragua. How did he get to Costa Rica?

Lorence had been in the full-time service since 1958 and had served in the circuit work in Canada and Alaska. When circuit overseers were invited to Brooklyn headquarters for a special Kingdom Ministry School, Brother Knorr asked if any were willing to accept an assignment as a missionary in a foreign country without attending Gilead School. Brother Shepp accepted the invitation. He was assigned to Nicaragua in 1961, where he married Juana Olimpia Guinart, a Cuban and a graduate of the 22nd class of Gilead. This was her third assignment, since she had already served as a missionary in Honduras and Mexico.

After Brother Shepp later attended a ten-month Gilead School, he and Olimpia packed their bags for their new assignment, El Salvador. First they decided to take a vacation in Costa Rica and immediately fell in love with that place. Little did they know that a letter changing their assignment to Costa Rica was already in the mail.

The Shepps arrived in September 1966, and at the international assembly in December of that year, Brother Knorr announced that Brother Shepp was appointed as branch overseer. At present he is the Branch Committee coordinator.

Lorence Shepp, who has served as Branch Committee coordinator since 1966, with his wife, Olimpia



STIMULUS TO EXPAND

In December 1954 Brother Knorr visited Costa Rica again and announced the building of a new branch home and Kingdom Hall. Enthusiasm ran high. Arrangements were made to purchase a lot in the heart of San José. Then, early in January, just when the brothers were to begin construction, an invasion by armed forces moved in from the north. Despite towns and villages being machine-gunned by airplanes, the brothers continued witnessing from door to door to comfort the people with the message of God's Kingdom. The January field service reports showed that the previous year's peak had been passed. But April's peak proved to be even greater! There was a 30-percent increase, with 2,078 publishers.

What about the new branch facilities? Were they delayed? The branch building was completed on January 25, 1956, just two days before the surprise visit of Brother Knorr and his wife, Audrey. It was dedicated on January 27, 1956.

FLAG-SALUTE PROBLEMS

In September 1959 the flag-salute issue came to the fore in the schools of Puerto Limón. Thirteen students, all Jehovah's Witnesses, refused to participate in these ceremonies because that would violate their Christian conscience. Although they had not engaged in any disrespectful act and their conduct had been without reproach, the Witness children were charged with rebellion and insubordination and were expelled from school.

The local court denied permission for the children to be reinstated as long as they refused to salute the flag. The case was appealed to the Supreme Court of Costa Rica. There it was pointed out to the Court that the Constitution of Costa Rica guarantees freedom of worship and the right to be educated in the schools of the state. However, the Supreme Court upheld the decision of the lower court, saying that the law regarding freedom of worship had not been violated.

At the beginning of the next term, most of the students were readmitted to school but were expelled again when they failed to join in other flag-saluting ceremonies. A petition was then made to the Superior Council of Education, but on July 5, 1960, this petition was denied.

The flag-salute issue generated a great deal of publicity by both the press and the radio. The issue still exists in schools to this day, but many of the teachers recognize the excellent conduct of the young Witnesses and prefer to look the other way rather than make an issue of the children's firm, conscientious stand. They realize that to expel

these students would, in many cases, mean losing the cream of the class.

In one rural school, out of the 50 students enrolled, only 6 were not Jehovah's Witnesses. So if these Witnesses were expelled, the school would have to close, and the teacher would be out of a job.

Many teachers thought that those expelled from school would not be able to make a success of their lives without a formal education. Milton Hylton, grandson of Francela Williams, proved them wrong. Although expelled from school, "this resulted in a blessing," he remarks. "I first had the opportunity to prove my integrity to Jehovah and then to enjoy the benefits of over 13 years in full-time service." When it became necessary for Brother Hylton to work full-time, he obtained a job as an office clerk and later received a position as private accountant with the same company, without neglecting his theocratic activities.

VOLCANOES IRAZÚ AND ARENAL AWAKE

On March 13, 1963, Irazú, one of Costa Rica's many volcanoes, awoke from its 20-year siesta to a 2-year period of activity. The volcano, which sits about 32 kilometers from the capital, coughed up ash into the prevailing winds, which carried the volcanic ash from the crater and deposited it on San José, where about one quarter of all Costa Ricans live. The city of Cartago, nestled at the foot of the volcano, was relatively unaffected by this fallout, as the winds carried the ash high over the city. But Cartago was soon hit by a different kind of catastrophe.

On the night of December 9, 1963, heavy rains saturated the deep drifts of ash on the sides of the volcano. Overloaded, the sodden ash slid down the mountain and into the ash-clogged rivers, causing them to overrun their banks. One swollen river swept through the city of Cartago, carrying away homes along with their sleeping inhabitants, as well as livestock and wild animals. People lost their lives in this flood in spite of the fact that police cars with loudspeakers patrolled the streets ahead of time, warning of the approaching disaster. Either the victims did not take the warning seriously or they were unwilling to abandon their material possessions. They paid with their lives for their failure to listen.

For many years the people of Cartago had adopted a similar attitude toward the warning about the approaching war of Armageddon. No doubt they felt secure from harm because their city is home to the famous basilica where the image of the patroness "saint" of Costa Rica is housed. But after the disaster and after more than 30 years of preaching in this city, a congregation was finally established toward the end of 1964.

After Mount Irazú tired of spewing out death and destruction, another volcano, Arenal, after laying dormant for about 600 years, began a period of activity. When Arenal, located in the northern part of Costa Rica, began to erupt, there were some five congregations within the affected zone. Many of the brothers living in that area had no alternative but to flee. None of them lost their lives, but they did lose their material possessions. Quickly, the

brothers in all parts of Costa Rica came to their aid with contributions of food, clothing, and money.

SLOWING DOWN DURING THE 1960'S

The years 1964 and 1965 brought no increase. Costa Rica's annual report blamed the economic conditions. Many publishers had to leave Costa Rica to obtain secular work elsewhere. Another reason was also mentioned in the annual report: "Unfortunately, a large number of people had to be disfellowshipped for unclean living, but all are anxious to keep the organization clean for pure worship."

The work limped along for three more years with no increase. This time allowed for the testing and maturing of spiritual men that would be needed for the spurt of growth that was to come. One such man was Andrés Garita. He served in the circuit and district work for 20 years. To what did he attribute his endurance? "My parents started studying in 1946, and we always faithfully attended meetings," he said. "I was baptized in 1953 at the age of 14. The meetings and field service brought me in close association with circuit overseers, who always gave me special attention and encouragement to take up the full-time service." In the spring of 1979, he was appointed as a member of the Branch Committee. He served faithfully as such as well as in the circuit and district work along with his wife, Mayra, and his six-year-old daughter, Andrea, until his sudden illness and unexpected death at the age of 48 on July 7, 1987. He was dearly loved and known by almost every Witness in Costa Rica, which was highlighted by the fact that more than 4,000 attended his funeral.

MORE MISSIONARIES SPUR THE WORK

The 1960's brought to the fore more young "gifts in men." (Eph. 4:8) Gilead has certainly added to Costa Rica's spiritual growth and maturity. Alvaro Muñoz and Milton Hylton were Costa Ricans invited to Gilead and then reassigned back home. Their years in the circuit work were greatly appreciated, and they continue to be a source of refreshment as elders in their home congregations.

Douglas Little and Frederick Hiltbrand from the United States, graduates of the 45th class of Gilead, were assigned to Costa Rica in 1968. They both served in the circuit work. In 1972 Douglas Little married Saray Campos, who had already been pioneering for seven years. The missionary family grew when two more brothers arrived, John Griffin and Lothar Mihank.

In 1976 Frederick Hiltbrand married Mirtha Chapa, a missionary from the 55th class of Gilead. Presently Frederick is serving as a member of the Branch Committee.

EARTHQUAKE IN MANAGUA

Close ties have been maintained between the brothers in Costa Rica and those in Nicaragua over the years, not only because of being neighbors but because their theocratic growth has been related. The brothers in Nicaragua suddenly fell in need when a strong earthquake rocked the capital, Managua, in December 1972.

Immediately, arrangements were made in Costa Rica to supply relief to the brothers in Managua. Although radio contact had not been established with Managua, a vehicle was sent out with almost

Frederick Hiltbrand, shown here with his wife, Mirtha, helped establish the printing operation



a ton of food. All of this was gathered in just 60 minutes from the time the brothers were first advised of the relief collection. The Nicaraguan consulate gave visas to the traveling brothers when they heard it was for aid from Jehovah's Witnesses. All the bureaucratic doors swung open, so that relief could be taken directly to the brothers.

FAMILY UNITY BRINGS SUCCESS

Trino Rojas and his two brothers were the town brawlers of Guápiles. When Mark Taylor, a special pioneer, began visiting Trino's parents, Trino did not like it and on one occasion even brazenly cracked his horsewhip after Mark. But Mark persevered in his visits, and gradually Trino picked up tidbits of the truth. Later, after Trino married Carmen, a neighbor lady gave them a Catholic book of Bible stories. Trino realized that these Bible stories coincided with what he had heard from Mark. When he told this to the Catholic lady, she was insulted and took the book back, thus whetting his appetite for more Bible knowledge.

So Trino and Carmen started to study with the Witnesses and were baptized in 1950.

They had 11 children. One of them, David, reminisces about the example his father and mother set for the family. "It was their persistence in the truth that impressed us all. We never missed a meeting even though we were 11 children and times were hard. Papa bought a farm in Roxana, and we moved so as to help a group of interested persons there."

David has been pioneering for more than ten years. "The backing our father gave us is what made it possible to pioneer," he says. Noé, one of David's younger brothers, recalls: "David became my example. When I was 13 years old, I would put in 100 hours in service. I dreamed one day that I would plant a cornfield, sell the corn, give the money to Papa, and go pioneering." This he did.

Although their parents, Trino and Carmen, have died, the children remain firm in the faith.

MISSIONARY SPIRIT CONTAGIOUS

Costa Rica has an outstanding group of full-time servants who are children of former missionaries. Robert Conroy, who arrived with his partner John Alexander in 1959, later married and continued in the circuit work in Costa Rica. When his wife, Dina, was pregnant, Robert said, "My wife and I prayed to Jehovah for guidance in raising our children, realizing that this was also a blessing from Jehovah." While the parents now engage in circuit work again after a pause of 20 years, their two children, Judy and Rodney, are presently serving at Bethel in Costa Rica.

Donald Fry, from the 22nd class of Gilead, saw his son, David, follow in his footsteps 50 classes later. David attended the 72nd class of Gilead and was assigned to the same country as his father—Costa Rica. Why did David decide to become a missionary like his father? "My previous association with happy missionaries in Costa Rica, along with theocratic guidance from my parents, moved me to want to be like them," he says.

Whether it has been possible to continue living in a foreign country or not, this contagious spirit permeates the families of many former missionaries. The Calls, the Sheldons, and the Blackburns have all raised their families with this wholesome spirit.

COSTA RICA SHARES ITS MISSIONARIES

In the past, some missionaries in Costa Rica were reassigned to other countries. In more recent times, John Alexander, who came to Costa Rica in 1959 from Gilead, and his wife, Corina, were reassigned to Panama in 1979. Later, in the spring of 1982, Lothar Mihank and his wife, Carmen, were asked to serve in Panama.

Did this weaken the preaching activity in Costa Rica? "While it is certainly true that we do miss the fine work that these faithful brothers have done," answers Brother Shepp, the Branch Committee coordinator, "the gap that they leave is quickly filled by the mature local brothers. Take, for example, the district work. While a few years ago we depended upon the missionaries who served the district from the branch office, now local brothers are doing a fine job in filling the gap.

This is also true of the circuit overseer work. Now the vast majority who serve in this responsible position are local Costa Rican brothers. So Jehovah always sees to it that the work does not depend on any one individual."

TRAIN CONDUCTOR TO CIRCUIT OVERSEER

Guillermo Badilla had been a train conductor on the route from San José to Puntarenas for over 20 years. When he retired at the age of 50, he immediately entered the full-time service. One of the five congregations he helped form was in Cartago. When he arrived there, he found only one publisher, who "was like a block of ice," recalls Brother Badilla. After ten months, though, a congregation was formed with nine publishers. Guiding people's lives on a different route, he has helped over 90 persons to baptism. And at the age of 70, he was appointed as circuit overseer.

INTEGRITY TESTED BY THE BLOOD ISSUE

Jehovah's Witnesses refuse blood transfusions for Scriptural reasons, even if their life is endangered. (Acts 15:29) But they are willing to accept alternate medical treatment. Some doctors cooperate with the Witnesses on this important medical matter, while others oppose them.

For example, Wilson Rojas was knocked unconscious by an explosion so powerful that it blew him through a storeroom wall, dropping him some 25 feet away. His partner was killed instantly. Wilson did not regain consciousness until eight days later, only to learn that he had lost the use of one eye, an ear, an arm, and a leg. Wilson staunchly refused a blood transfusion. His wife, Clarissa,

backed him up in his decision. The doctor, not pleased, said: "Let him die. He has five days left to live, no more."

Even though Brother Rojas signed a medical form freeing the hospital from all responsibility for treatment without blood, the hospital suspended all treatment except bandage changing. Almost miraculously, though, during the next two weeks, his condition slowly improved. Then came another sudden crisis. A blood clot in his left leg threatened to break free at any moment. A specialist took a keen interest in his case and was able to dissolve the clot with drugs. Soon after, on visiting Wilson at his bedside, the specialist asked why he had refused a blood transfusion. After Wilson explained, the specialist said: "The reason that blood clot didn't break free and kill you was the low blood volume and the thinness of the blood. Had you accepted a blood transfusion, you would most likely be dead. Congratulations!"

"MAN WANTED"

Another means to reach the hearts and minds of sheeplike persons is through Christian conduct. In a factory where an elder works, the employees were protesting against the working conditions and demanding higher wages. During a meeting between management and these workers, a phone call came from the manager of another company. When told about the discontent among the employees, he boasted: "We don't have that kind of problem with our workers, as the majority of them are Jehovah's Witnesses."

It was not long before this notice appeared in the

nation's most widely read newspaper: "MAN WANTED TO WORK IN OUR COMPANY. MUST BE ONE OF JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES, DEDICATED, BAPTIZED. PREFERABLY AN ELDER OR A MINISTERIAL SERVANT." Apparently no other qualifications were necessary.

MORE EFFORTS TO REACH OUT

During the 1970's, efforts were made to reach smaller towns with the good news. So it was that in 1972 Brother and Sister Siebenlist returned from the United States and settled in the town of Tres Ríos, 10 kilometers from San José.

In this town, a teenage boy had spearheaded a small sect called The Jehovah's Worshipers. The sect used the Society's literature. Because of divisions within this group, the Gutiérrez family broke off its association with the group and contacted the branch office to ask for a Bible study. Douglas Little was assigned to help them. He gives the following description of what happened:

"A study was started immediately with the Gutiérrez family, Miguel, Inés, and their three young boys. The parents had a working knowledge of the truth, since they had been reading the Society's publications diligently for months. Having been among the group's '12 apostles' and leaders in 'field service,' they had come to recognize that only one people enjoys Jehovah's blessing, which truth, at first, was not appreciated by other members.

"Sometime after the Gutiérrez family separated from the sect, the branch was contacted by the remaining members. They too wanted to study, and I was assigned to care for their needs. Arrangements were made for me to visit the whole group

and conduct a demonstration Bible study. To my surprise, I found some 15 people seated in a semi-circle, with answers underlined in the book *The Truth That Leads to Eternal Life* and with *New World Translations* open and ready. All 15 adults present that night, besides many of their relatives and friends, have dedicated their lives to Jehovah and now serve in his one earthly organization." Today, there are two congregations in Tres Ríos.

"UNITED IN WORSHIP"

Persecution in Cuba has united the brothers in Costa Rica with their spiritual brothers from Cuba. After the closing of the immigration route from Cuba to the United States in 1980, Costa Rica became one of the countries used by Cubans as way stations en route to other countries. Cubans arrived in Costa Rica voluntarily or because of governmental pressure or because their prison sentence would be canceled if they left Cuba.

Over a hundred Cuban Witnesses have entered Costa Rica. One of them, Ubaldo Fernández, a Cuban brother who served as an elder in the congregation of Santo Domingo, spoke in behalf of the Cuban brothers. "All the brothers who have arrived here are grateful to Jehovah for having been freed and very thankful to the Costa Rican brothers for the hospitality and the Christian love they have shown in every instance. So we continue as one people united in worship to the only true God, Jehovah."

UNEXPECTED MISSIONARIES

Help is always appreciated, and as Jesus said: "The harvest is great, but the workers are few.

Therefore, beg the Master of the harvest to send out workers into his harvest."—Matt. 9:37, 38.

Help came in the form of missionaries from the Gilead Extension School in Mexico. Juan and Rebecca Reyes and Arnolando Chaves graduated from the first class and were assigned to Nicaragua. This assignment in Nicaragua was short-lived, as they could not get permission to stay and were told to go to Costa Rica to try to solicit residence from there, which has proved unsuccessful. They have remained in Costa Rica in the circuit work.

Saturday, March 20, 1982, was the day 19 missionaries were expelled from Nicaragua—more unexpected guests. Nine of them were deported across the Costa Rican border by road. The other ten were sent by plane to Panama. Kevin and Ruby Block crossed the Costa Rican border by noon. By six o'clock that evening the other seven, with all the possessions they could pack in a suitcase, found themselves sitting under the stars along a deserted road inside Costa Rican territory. Soon brothers with vehicles arrived and drove them to the town of Liberia, where the Jorge Meléndez family had a hot meal and sleeping accommodations ready for them. The following day they were taken to the branch in San José. (On Tuesday the ten missionaries deported to Panama also arrived in Costa Rica.)

WITNESS THROUGH NEWS COVERAGE

By Saturday night the spotlight of world news began shining on the expelled missionaries. Over 41 newspapers and radio and TV stations telephoned the branch from all over the world, seek-

ing interviews with the missionaries. Wednesday morning, Rodrigo Fournier, a noted Costa Rican news commentator, requested an early-morning roundtable discussion with the deported missionaries. Reiner and Jeanne Thompson and Ian Hunter were interviewed on a nationwide TV program that lasted 40 minutes. Highlighted during the program were our neutral position toward all earthly governments, our interest in God's Kingdom, and how our teaching bolsters family unity. The program became the talk of the country and opened up many opportunities to witness.

Arrangements were made for this close-knit missionary group to stay at the Bethel home. In a few weeks, new assignments arrived from Brooklyn, and the missionaries were dispersed to Belize, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras, except for Brother and Sister Thompson and Brother Edward Errichetti. They were assigned to stay in Costa Rica, and Brother Thompson was appointed a member of the Branch Committee.

Bill and Mavis Rogers were not expelled with the other 19 missionaries, so they remained for another five months in Nicaragua. After being held under "house arrest" for two weeks in a hotel, they were deported to Costa Rica in August. They too were interviewed on TV. When asked what they were doing in Nicaragua to merit being deported, Bill told the TV audience, "Only preaching the good news of God's Kingdom." Next, on the same program, the archbishop of Costa Rica was interviewed. He was asked what he thought Christians should be doing today. He was obliged to reply, "Preach the gospel of the Kingdom." Brother and

Sister Rogers eventually left for their new assignment in El Salvador.

BETHEL FAMILY INCREASES

The Bethel family consisted of four members in 1977. But because of the surge in the number of publishers, by 1982 there were six working at Bethel to supply the needs of the congregations in both Costa Rica and another territory assigned to the branch. In 1980 the 5,000 mark in average publishers was passed, and 1981 saw an astounding peak of 6,183 publishers. By 1981, 118 congregations comprising six circuits reported and in 1982 this count jumped to 138 congregations in seven circuits.

One of the monthly jobs of the branch office is to provide *Our Kingdom Ministry* to each publisher. Although it was printed in Brooklyn, New York, in 1965 Costa Rica began editing its own *Our Kingdom Ministry*, allowing for more localized announcements to be included. Then another step forward came in January 1982, when Costa Rica began local printing of *Our Kingdom Ministry* on its own offset press. In the summer of 1983, an IBM Composer was purchased to make the small press more versatile, and by 1984 more than ten workers were needed in Bethel to care for the needs of the congregations.

WHY A CHANGE?

For many years, a complacent, contented attitude existed among the populace. Many were religiously proud and refused to discuss the Bible. But as the worsening world conditions, in fulfillment of Bible prophecy, touched more people's lives, their hearts began to wonder what it all

meant. Economic crises, terrorist activities, and refugees—all these conditions opened the way for a more responsive house-to-house ministry, resulting in more Bible studies. Thus, what have the years 1982-87 brought? A cause for rejoicing! The peak of publishers increased from 6,611 to 10,374.

Another reason for the increase is that the total number of pioneers has more than doubled to 792. Ever since 1984, the number of home Bible studies has surpassed the number of publishers.

NEW BRANCH FACILITIES

In January 1984 an all-out effort toward the construction of new branch facilities started. In 1955 the branch had been built in the center of San José. Then in 1977 it was remodeled. Within just a few years, the branch building seemed to be bursting at its seams. The library was occupied by four desks, and at times office workers used their own rooms because of lack of office space. The hallways served for storage, and the shipping-room table doubled as an auxiliary bed. The conference room was converted into the printery. Was it time to expand?

For over a year, members of the Branch Committee searched for suitable land. Finally, with the help of Brother John Craddock, who had acquaintances in the business sector, an ideal place was located: sixteen acres of fertile land in a rural setting, just off the Pan-American Highway between the Juan Santamaría Airport and San José. The property is surrounded by three major cities and yet is large enough to allow for future expansion. It is a peaceful setting, with a daily

had participated in the actual construction. The rest had a share by their earnest prayers, encouragement, and contributions. All this effort was extended because Jehovah's people trust in his promise to 'make it grow.'—1 Cor. 3:7.

THE DATE WAS SET

Dedication, January 4, 1987! The whole country was invited. Brothers Swingle and Underwood from Brooklyn Bethel gave Scripturally encouraging talks, and then Milton Henschel, also from Brooklyn Bethel, expressed the purpose of the occasion: to dedicate the facilities to Jehovah and His interests. As the sun set in the west, all 13,311 in attendance thanked Jehovah for his spirit and guidance during the two-year construction project.

Even during the construction period, it was evident the increase was on. Twenty-four new peaks in publishers had been reached since the construction had started. With new peaks of 10,374 publishers and 13,425 home Bible studies, it is obvious that the new facilities will soon be used to the full. The new branch will serve the needs of those future witnesses of Jehovah who are among the 30,534 that attended the Memorial in 1987.

WHAT HAPPENED TO THE GIRLS OF THE '40'S

Remember the pioneer girls of the 1940's? Where are they now? Did these sisters tire out? By no means! All are still active. Six sisters attended Gilead, and four are still missionaries. Five are special pioneers, and three are pioneering after raising their families or making adjustments in their schedules.

Why have they kept so busy in the Kingdom



Aerial view of new branch, with reception circle to the fore; printing, shipping, and offices to the left; and residence to the right

panorama of strikingly beautiful rainbows and changing clouds sloping over volcanoes.

By May 1984 the property was purchased. Over 4,200 square meters of floor space was planned, in comparison to the 550 square meters of the former branch. Help came from Bethelites, all the country's circuit overseers, and many of the special pioneers, pioneers, and congregation publishers. Added to these were the many professional construction workers from the United States, Canada, the Netherlands, Germany, Finland, Guatemala, and Panama. The foreign workers totaled over 300, and their stay ranged from days to several years.

By the time the construction was finished, almost 5,000 publishers from most congregations



Pioneer girls of the '40's still have the pioneer spirit. Left to right: Jenny Taylor; Evelyn Taylor; Mireya Ortega; Jenny Dillon; Corina Novoa; Lila Swaby

preaching work? Lila Swaby answers: "Working with the older anointed sisters when we were young built us up. We are no longer young, but their example continues as an inspiration to us."

A RICH COAST INDEED!

It was apropos when the land was named Rich Coast by Christopher Columbus but for reasons beyond his imagination. Now, over 80 years since the truth reached these shores, the treasures of Costa Rica have proved to be its people whose God is Jehovah. A refining of these riches came with the visits of Brother Knorr and other special representatives from the Society's headquarters. The presence of the missionaries spearheaded the preaching work, as well as stabilized the congregations that in turn have produced more riches—praisers of Jehovah. Indeed, Costa Rica is a coast of spiritual riches!

'WE ARE SERVING JEHOVAH!'

"Choose for yourselves today whom you will serve" is the challenge Joshua put before the Israelites 34 centuries ago. Joshua's response to his own heart-searching words rang clear: "As for me and my household, we shall serve Jehovah." (Josh. 24:15) Like Joshua of old, Jehovah's Witnesses of today "shall serve Jehovah." That was our text for last year. And the report for the 1987 service year vividly shows that Jehovah's Witnesses in 210 lands are serving Jehovah wholeheartedly!

Did you not rejoice in learning of the new peak in publishers—3,395,612? What about the number baptized—230,843? Both increases are visible evidences of Jehovah's blessings on our worldwide evangelizing work this past service year. Just imagine! The increases we have read about in our *Yearbook* have been observed from heaven by the holy angels along with Jehovah and Christ Jesus. What joy this must have brought to them!—Compare Luke 15:6, 7.

Even governmental bans cannot stop Christ Jesus from actively directing his disciples to push forward in the evangelizing work. The record number of 267,296 publishers busy in areas where the freedom to preach is curtailed is living proof of that fact. What fine examples of loyalty these brothers have set—even at risk of imprisonment or loss of life!

Our brothers have suffered greatly in many places. In one African country, a terrible wave of persecution swept over our brothers from January to April 1987. Scores of them were arrested simply because they were Jehovah's Witnesses. But theocratic activity has been reorganized, and the work of disciple-making continues. The branch overseeing that country reports: "Inevitably with such persecution there has been a cleaning out of those lacking faith. However, the vast majority remain firm, and the work continues to progress, with many new ones being baptized."

In some countries where our witnessing activity has been under restrictions, our brothers have been allowed more freedom to preach and meet openly. We are thankful that in these places fair-minded rulers have been moved to lift such restrictions and that prayers in behalf of our brothers have been answered. (1 Tim. 2: 1, 2) Quick changes in rulers in some other lands have brought violent persecution. These changed circumstances are not always reported in the *Yearbook*. Thus, let this be a reminder that we should not become complacent in our worship and conclude that violent opposition happens only in faraway places. Use the experiences in this report both as a source of encouragement and as a strengthening aid for whatever the future may bring. How encouraging are the words of the apostle Paul! He wrote: "If God is for us, who will be against us?"—Rom. 8:31.

The "Great Crowd" Keeps Growing

We are glad to witness the foretold gathering of the "great crowd," even though this calls for increased effort on the part of all of us. (Rev. 7:9) More Kingdom Halls and Assembly Halls must be built, and more branch facilities must be enlarged. We truly appreciate the generous donations of labor and finances from our fellow worshipers to assist us in this vast expansion work. The selfishness of the world has certainly not rubbed off on our brothers.—2 Tim. 3:1, 2.

Some brothers are able to become part of the International Volunteer Construction Worker program and assist in the construction of branches outside of their home country. One volunteer worker wrote us: "I have to say *thank you for the exquisite privilege!* It is hard to put into words the strength and love that I found in working with my brothers. Their humility, their love for the Bible and Jehovah, and their firm hold on the hope of the new world left me with much to meditate upon at the end of each day."

True, the marvelous increase in the number of praisers of Jehovah brings many blessings to all of his people, but it also stresses a great need not to slack the hand. The preaching of the Kingdom good news must continue until the end. (Mark 13:10) And as is evident from last year's Memorial attendance of 8,965,221, there are many more who may yet become our associates in the evangelizing work. So now is the time to 'exert ourselves vigorously' in "the work of the Lord." (Luke 13:24; 1 Cor. 15:58) Does not the example of our brothers, as related in this report, create within us a burning desire to do everything possible toward helping new ones to join us in true worship? Many are entering full-time service. You, also, may be able to join the zealous pioneers, who reached a peak of 665,327 during 1987. If this is not possible because of situations beyond your control, do not be disheartened. Do your best in Jehovah's service, and he will bless you.—Luke 21:1-4.

What can all of us do to assist and encourage the many young people associating at our meetings, as well as the newly baptized ones? We need to show understanding and patience. Be kind and sympathetic, and encourage them to make progress, inviting them to share with us in Kingdom activity.

Since we are living in a time of testing, be determined, like Joshua, to serve Jehovah! May the experiences recorded in this *Yearbook* help us to appreciate Jehovah's assurance that we need not be afraid. (Isa. 41:10) While world tensions continue to mount, may all of us heed the wise counsel of the 1988 service year text: "Hope in Jehovah and keep his way."—Ps. 37:34.

We at the world headquarters care for you and are concerned about you very much. We pray that you will "go on growing in the undeserved kindness and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ" and of his God and our God, Jehovah.—2 Pet. 3:18.

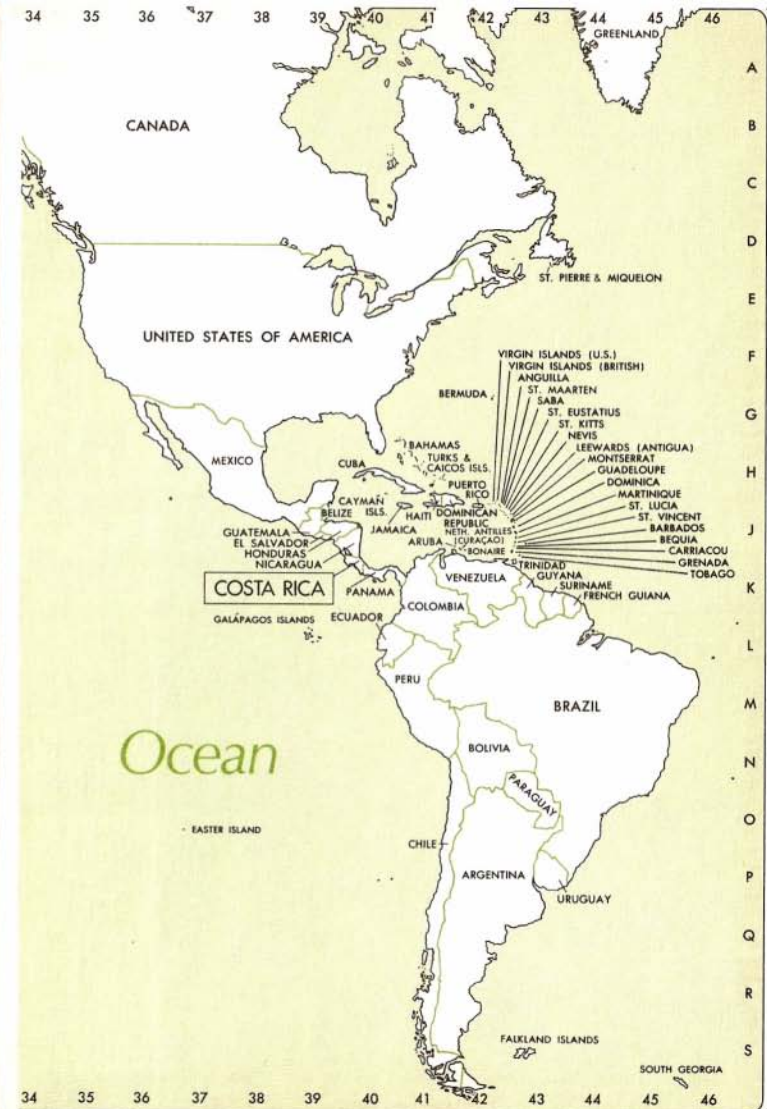
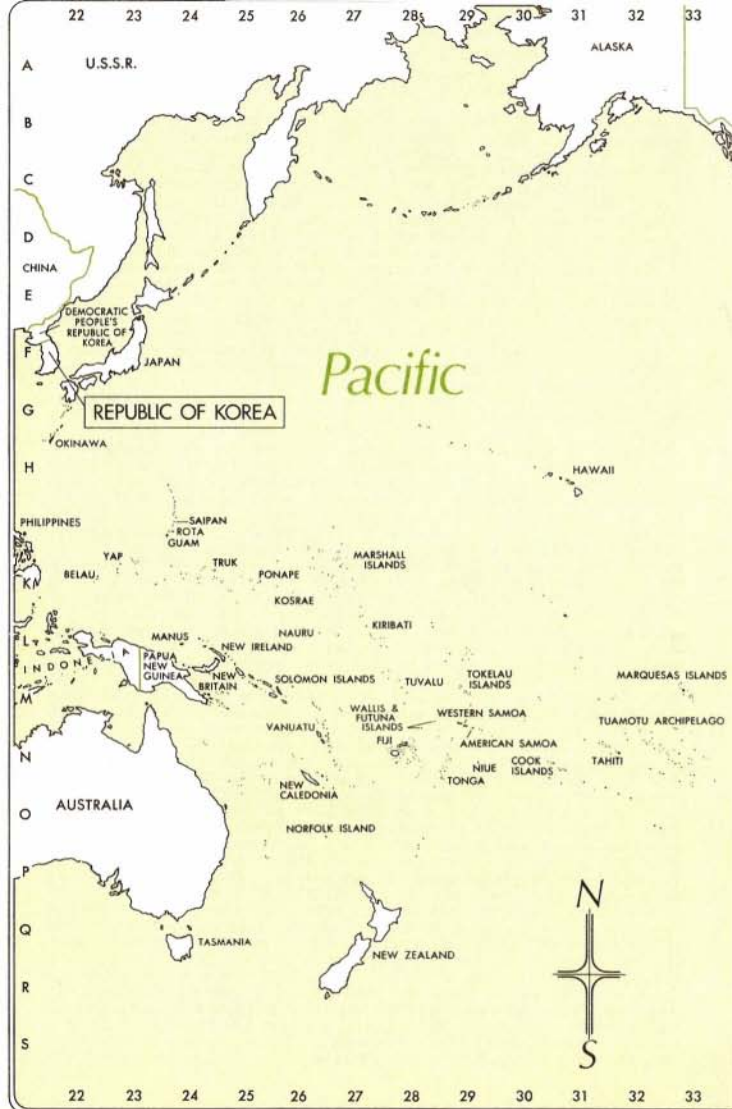
Your brothers,

GOVERNING BODY OF JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES

CHIEF OFFICE AND OFFICIAL ADDRESS OF
Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania
Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc.
International Bible Students Association
25 Columbia Heights, Brooklyn, New York 11201, U.S.A.

ADDRESSES OF BRANCH OFFICES:

ALASKA 99507: 2552 East 48th Ave., Anchorage. ARGENTINA: Caldas 1551, 1427 Buenos Aires. AUSTRALIA: Box 280, Ingleburn, N.S.W. 2565; Zouch Road, Denham Court, N.S.W. 2565. AUSTRIA: Gallgasse 42-44, Postfach 67, A-1134 Vienna. BAHAMAS: Box N-1247, Nassau, N.P. BARBADOS: Fontabelle Rd., Bridgetown. BELGIUM: rue d'Argile 60, B-1950 Kraainem. BELIZE: Box 257, Belize City. BOLIVIA: Casilla No. 1440, La Paz. BRAZIL: Rodovia SP-141, Km 43, 18280 Cesario Lange, SP; Caixa Postal 92, 18270 Tatui, SP. BURMA: P.O. Box 62, Rangoon. CANADA L7G 4Y4: Box 4100, Halton Hills (Georgetown), Ontario. CHILE: Av. Concha y Toro 3456, Puente Alto; Casilla 267, Puente Alto. COLOMBIA: Apartado Aereo 85058, Bogotá 8, D.E. COSTA RICA: Apartado 10043, San José. COTE D'IVOIRE (IVORY COAST): 06 B.P. 393, Abidjan 06. CYPRUS: P. O. Box 4091, Limassol. DENMARK: P.B. 340; Stenhusvej 28, DK-4300 Høibæk. DOMINICAN REPUBLIC: Avenida Francia 33 (Apartado 1742), Santo Domingo. ECUADOR: Casilla 4512, Guayaquil. EL SALVADOR: Apartado 401, San Salvador. ENGLAND NW7 1RN: The Ridgeway, London. FIJI: Box 23, Suva. FINLAND: Postbox 68, SF-01301 Vantaa 30. FRANCE: 81 rue du Point-du-Jour, F-92100 Boulogne-Billancourt. GERMANY, FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF: Postfach 20, D-6251 Selters/Taunus 1. GHANA: Box 760, Accra. GREECE: 77 Leoforos Kifisias, GR-151 24 Marousi. GUADELOUPE: B.P. 239, 97156 Pointe-à-Pitre Cedex. GUAM 96913: 143 Jehovah St., Barrigada. GUATEMALA: 11 Avenida 5-67, Guatemala 1. GUYANA: 50 Brickdam, Georgetown 16. HAITI: Post Box 185, Port-au-Prince. HAWAII 96819: 2055 Kam IV Rd., Honolulu. HONDURAS: Apartado 147, Tegucigalpa. HONG KONG: 4 Kent Road, Kowloon Tong. ICELAND: P. O. Box 8496, IS-128 Reykjavik. INDIA: Post Bag 10, Lonavla, Pune Dis., Mah. 410 401. IRELAND: 29A Jamestown Road, Finglas, Dublin 11. ISRAEL: P. O. Box 961, 61-009 Tel Aviv. ITALY: Via della Bufalotta 1281, I-00138 Rome RM. JAMAICA: Box 180, Kingston 10. JAPAN: 1271 Nakashinden, Ebina City, Kanagawa Pref., 243-04. KENYA: Box 47788, Nairobi. KOREA, REPUBLIC OF: Box 33 Pyungtaek P. O., Kyungido, 180. LEeward ISLANDS: Box 119, St. Johns, Antigua. LIBERIA: P.O. Box 171, Monrovia. LUXEMBOURG: 41, rue du Père Raphaël, L-2413 Luxembourg, G. D. MADAGASCAR: B.P. 511, Antananarivo 101. MALAYSIA: 28 Jalan Kampar, Off Jalan Landasan, 41300 Klang, Sel. MARTINIQUE: Cours Campeche, Morne Tartenson, 97200 Fort de France. MAURITIUS: 5 Osman Ave., Vacoas. MEXICO: Apartado Postal 42-048, 06471 México, D.F. NETHERLANDS: Noordburgerstraat 77, 7812 AA Emmen. NETHERLANDS ANTILLES: Oosterbeekstraat 11, Willemstad, Curaçao. NEW CALEDONIA: B.P. 787, Nouméa. NEW ZEALAND: P.O. Box 142; 198 Mahia Rd., Manurewa. NIGERIA: PMB 001, Shomolu, Lagos State. NORWAY: Gaupeveien 24, N-1914 Ytre Enebakk. PAKISTAN: 197-A Ahmad Block, New Garden Town, Lahore 16. PANAMA: Apartado 1835, Panama 9A. PAPUA NEW GUINEA: Box 636, Boroko, N.C.D. PERU: Av. El Cortijo 329, Monterrico Chico, Lima 33; Casilla 18-1055, Miraflores, Lima 18. PHILIPPINES, REPUBLIC OF: P.O. Box 2044, Manila 2800; 186 Roosevelt Ave., San Francisco del Monte, Quezon City 3010. PORTUGAL: Rua Conde Barao, 511, Alcabideche, P-2765 Estoril. PUERTO RICO 00927: Calle Onix 23, Urb. Bucaré, Río Piedras. SENEGAL: B.P. 3107, Dakar. SIERRA LEONE: P. O. Box 136, Freetown. SOLOMON ISLANDS: P.O. Box 166, Honiara. SOUTH AFRICA: Private Bag 2067, Krugersdorp, 1740. SPAIN: Apartado postal 132, E-28850 Torrejón de Ardoz (Madrid). SRI LANKA, REP. OF: 62 Layard's Road, Colombo 5. SURINAME: Wicherstraat 8-10; Box 49, Paramaribo. SWEDEN: Box 5, S-732 00 Arboga. SWITZERLAND: Ulmenweg 45; P.O. Box 225, CH-3602 Thun. TAHITI: B.P. 518, Papeete. TAIWAN: 109 Yun Ho Street, Taipei 10613. THAILAND: 69/1 Soi 2, Sukhumvit Rd., Bangkok 10 110. TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO, REP. OF: Lower Rapsey Street & Laxmi Lane, Curepe. UNITED STATES OF AMERICA: 25 Columbia Heights, Brooklyn, N.Y. 11201. URUGUAY: Francisco Bauzá 3372, Montevideo. VENEZUELA: Apartado 116, La Victoria, Edo. Aragua 2121A. WESTERN SAMOA: P. O. Box 673, Apia. ZAMBIA, REP. OF: Box 21598, Kitwe. ZIMBABWE: 35 Fife Avenue, Harare.



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